THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

XXVII

(May-July 1925)

IN 1925

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

XXVII
(May - July 1925)

STATE CENTRAL LIBRARY ... ALBERABAD.

सत्यमेव जयते

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

March 1968 (Phalguna' 1889)

© *Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad, 1968*

COPYRIGHT

By Kind Permission of Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad

SHED BY THE DIRECTOR, THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, DELHI-6
AND PRINTED IN INDIA BY SHANTILAL HARJIVAN SHAH,
NAVAJIVAN PRESS, AHMEDABAD-14

PREFACE

During the three months, May, June and July 1925, Gandhiji was engaged on a tour of Bengal. The one outstanding event was the death of C. R. Das which took place at Darjeeling on June 16. This calamity overshadows this Volume, which is naturally dominated by institutions like Santiniketan and Khadi Pratishthan, and personalities like Rabindranath Tagore and Surendranath Banerjea. The general movement for the promotion of swadeshi, communal unity and the abolition of untouchability received fresh nuances from local attitudes and conditions. Politics Gandhiji voiced only in an undertone and they were for the most part the politics of the Swaraj Party. The reorganization of the Congress as an instrument of the constructive programme was a matter of the deepest concern to Gandhiji. It was only towards the end of the period that his utterances turned militant in the face of British intransigence, and indicated a distinct probability of resort to civil resistance.

Both the political programme and the constructive programme were accepted as useful and necessary. While the Swarajists concentrated on the former, Gandhiji himself devoted his time and attention to the latter. Each party, however, well understood and tried to help the other.

On the constructive programme Gandhiji's views crystallized more clearly. He was sure that the swadeshi movement at this time was more solidly based than that of 1905-8 which, though "magnificent in conception", had little organization behind it and relied on "the broken reeds" of the Bombay and Ahmedabad mills. Now spinning served as a bond with the masses, the charkha was the device to make them all feel that they were children of the same land. The charkha had now become a magnificent obsession not only with him but with millions all over the country. He wished for it a larger place in Santiniketan (p. 181). He pleaded with C. R. Das to "learn the thing and spin religiously for half an hour for the sake of the millions and in the name of God" (p. 229).

The object of the internal programme of the National Congress was to achieve unity among all races, Hindu-Muslim unity being a short term to cover all classes. His tours had revealed to him that the major communities were filled with mutual dis-

trust, but he had no doubt that each regarded unity as a paramount national interest. Speaking at Noakhali on May 14, he laid the blame for disunity on both parties and declared that no power on earth could separate them if they were determined to be united. To an Anglo-Indian representative he gave the categorical reassurance, "the greater communities. . . had solemn obligations to perform towards the lesser communities" (p. 183). He commended concrete assistance rendered by one community to another, as during the flood relief work in Bengal, where a predominantly Hindu organization helped a predominantly Muslim population (p. 201).

When he was twitted over the lack of unity in food, drink or worship even among the Hindus, he retorted: "Unity I hanker after is one of heart. It transcends these barriers and can subsist in spite of them" (p. 319). His realistic approach to the problem was illustrated by his acclaiming the usefulness of Annie Besant's efforts "to secure freedom in spite of communal dissensions". There was room, he saw, for both, those who sought freedom despite differences and those who tried to remove differences for paving the road to freedom.

Untouchability continued to cause much heart-searching. To the untouchables he recommended a "dignified attitude and not vindictiveness" (p. 14). He held up the example of Nanda, an *Antyaja* saint of the South, whom he described as "the very embodiment of satyagraha" (p. 72). To the caste Hindus, on the other hand, his exhortation was to "honour the despised" (p. 273). Hatred was implicit in untouchability and this hatred they must do away with (p. 384). Those who were impatient with the slow progress of the reform movement he admonished and comforted with the thought that removal of abuses must come from within, not imposed from without; but he saw the Bastille of untouchability being slowly undermined (p. 287). Again and again he expounded his conception of Hinduism as a religion which never "counted heads" (p. 106). On the contrary, it was so inclusive that a practising Hindu was claimed by Buddhists, Jains, Christians and Muslims as their own. Buddha himself lived Hinduism in his own life. Buddhism was nothing but Hinduism reduced to practice in terms of the masses. One's traditional religion was however a matter of life and death. "A man does not change religion as he changes his garments. . . . It is a matter of the heart" (pp. 188-9). Addressing women missionaries he asked: "What is political and what is religious? Can life be divided into

such watertight compartments? . . . Politics separated from religion stinks, religion detached from politics is meaningless" (pp. 203-4).

Of the power of *Ramanama*, the unfailing means and potent expression of his faith, and of how it saved him during the course of his life, he writes with candour in an article where he confesses, "My private life has become public life. For my part, there is not a single thing in the world which I would conceal from others. My experiments are spiritual. . . . They depend very much on self-examination on my part. I have carried them out, following the maxim: 'As in one's body, so in the universe.' The underlying assumption is that what is possible to me must be so to all others" (pp. 107-8). Realizing the need for humility among all men of religion, he had no patience with reformers who in their anger wanted to reform the world without reforming themselves. Spiritual progress came only through service rendered in the name of God. In his letter dated July 16, to C. Rajagopalachari, he explained his position thus: "My body and mind are living in a world by which I remain unaffected, but in which I am being tried. My soul is living in a world physically away from me and yet a world by which I am and want to be affected. . . . Your *sadhana* is the development of the place where you are and a scientific test of our theory of the value of hand-spinning" (pp. 384-5).

His faith in non-violence found repeated and ever fresh expression. Writing to Sarat Chandra Bose on June 15, he said: "Non-violence is love. It works silently, almost secretly. . . . Love has no play as between friends and relatives. These love one another from selfishness, not from enlightenment. It has play only as between opponents so called. It demands, therefore, the highest charity and all the chivalry one is capable of showing towards those who oppose or persecute one" (pp. 241-2). In his continuing dialogue with the revolutionaries, for example, "At It Again" (pp. 48-52) and "On the Verge of It" (pp. 131-5), he conceded their courage and self-sacrifice, but stated with perfect frankness and clarity his unshaken faith in non-violence. Though he refused to preach universal non-violence because, at the moment, neither he nor his country had transcended *dvaitabhava*, he still pleaded with the revolutionaries "to keep their feet firm on mother earth and not scale the Himalayan heights to which the poet took Arjuna and other heroes. . . . The plains of Hindustan are good enough for me" (p. 135).

He told a meeting of missionaries: "I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism as I know it, entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being and I find a solace in the *Bhagavad Gita* and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. Not that I do not prize the ideal presented therein, not that some of the precious teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have not left a deep impression upon me, but I must confess to you that, when doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the *Bhagavad Gita*, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*" (p. 435). Ever "a seeker after truth" he knew "the wonderful efficacy of silence". He remembered throughout his life the precious lesson he learned during his visit to the beautiful Trappist Monastery in South Africa: "If we want to listen to the still small voice that is always speaking within us, it will not be heard if we continually speak" (p. 438).

This constant preoccupation with matters of the spirit even in the heat and dust of politics did not mean lack of realism or interest in the assessment and handling of political trends and views. Gandhiji affirmed his confidence in C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru, leaders of the Swaraj Party, and when the death of Deshbandhu cast a spell of gloom over the land, he made efforts to honour his memory by means conducive to the welfare of the masses, a cause dear to Deshbandhu's heart. Such was his trust in the leaders of the Swaraj Party that he would do nothing in the Congress without their consent. Writing on July 18 on the misleading statement of Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State, he declared: "...whilst Motilalji will be fighting in the Assembly and leading the Swaraj Party in the place of Deshbandhu, I shall be leaving no stone unturned to prepare the atmosphere needed for civil resistance ..." (p. 391). The Congress would then become predominantly a political party. In fact, he offered to place it at Motilal Nehru's disposal so that the Swaraj Party would become the Congress. But even during this preparation for an eventual struggle, Gandhiji never departed from his policy of friendliness towards the British, as could be seen from his letter to Fred E. Campbell dated July 28 and the statement made a few days earlier to a European that he was "dying to co-operate" with them. His way in politics was well summed up in the dictum: "You non-co-operate with measures, not with men" (p. 85).

Indian nationalism was presented in its proper perspective, as one people's *svadharma* in a universal dharma. "... it is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when people belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man. . . . Indian nationalism . . . wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. Anyway, there is no uncertainty about my patriotism or nationalism. God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my Maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them, I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country" (pp. 255-6). The struggle for India's freedom was thus part of a larger world movement concerning all mankind.

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the August 1958 edition. References to *An Autobiography* cite only the Part and the Chapter, in view of the varying pagination in different editions.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the Volume are also provided at the end.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For material in this volume, we are indebted to the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust and Sangrahalaya, the Navajivan Trust and the Gujarat Vidyapith Granthalaya, Ahmedabad; the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; the Hony. Secretary, Public Library, Allahabad; Smt. Radhabehn Choudhri, Calcutta; Shri Narayan Desai, Bardoli; Shri Narandas Gandhi, Rajkot; Shri Kashinath Kelkar, Poona; Smt. Mirabehn, Gaaden, Austria; Smt. Vasumati Pandit, Surat; Smt. Rajmohini Rudra, Allahabad; Shri Purushottamdas Thakurdas; the publishers of the books: *Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne* and *Bapuni Prasadi*, and the following newspapers and journals: *Aaj*, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *The Bombay Chronicle*, *Forward*, *TheHindu*, *The Hindustan Times*, *Navajivan*, *The Searchlight*, *The Statesman* and *Young India*.

For research and reference facilities, we owe thanks to the A India Congress Committee Library, the Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, the Indian Council of World Affairs Library, the Research and Reference Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi; the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya and the Gujarat Vidyapith Granthalaya, Ahmedabad and Shri Pyarelal Nayyar, New Delhi; and for assistance in photo-printing documents, to the Photo Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi.

CONTENTS

PREFACE v
NOTE TO THE READER xi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS xiii
ILLUSTRATIONS xxiii
1 MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE (1-5-1925) 1
2 INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN" (1-5-1925) 1
3 INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS (1-5-1925) 3
4 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA (1-5-1925) 4
5 SPEECH AT INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION, FARIDPUR (2-5-1925) 9
6 SPEECH AT ALL-BENGAL HINDU SAMMELAN (2-5-1925) 10
7 SPEECH AT BENGAL PROVINCIAL YOUNG MEN'S CONFERENCE (2-5-1925) 11
8 TALK WITH UNTOUCHABLES (On or before 3-5-1925) 12
9 REPLY TO ADDRESS (On or before 3-5-1925) 16
10 COW-PROTECTION (3-5-1925) 18
11 MY NOTES (3-5-1925) 19
12 LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA (3-5-1925) 26
13 REPLY TO CIVIC ADDRESSES, FARIDPUR (3-5-1925) 26
14 SPEECH AT BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, FARIDPUR (3-5-1925) 27
15 REMINISCENCES OF BENGAL (4-5-1925) 36
16 SPEECH AT PRABARTAK ASHRAM, CHANDERNAGORE (5-5-1925) 41
17 SPEECH AT ASHTANGA AYURVEDA VIDYALAYA (6-5-1925) 43
18 COW-PROTECTION (7-5-1925) 46
19 AT IT AGAIN (7-5-1925) 48
20 NOTES (7-5-1925) 52
21 BENGAL NOTES (7-5-1925) 54
22 LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE (7-5-1925) 60
23 SPEECH AT BUDDHA BIRTH ANNIVERSARY (7-5-1925) 61
24 SPEECH AT LOHOGUNJ (8-5-1925) 64
25 SPEECH AT MALIKANDA (8-5-1925) 65
26 REMARKS AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, DIGHIRPUR (9-5-1925) 66
27 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DIGHIRPUR (9-5-1925) 66
28 SPEECH AT KHADI WORKERS' MEETING, TALTOLA (9-5-1925) 67
29 SPEECH AT MALKHANAGAR (9-5-1925) 69
30 INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA (9-5-1925) 71
31 UNTOUCHABLE SAINT NANDA (10-5-1925) 72
32 LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI (10-5-1925) 73

33 SPEECH AT MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION, PURANBAZAR (10-5-1925) 74
34 SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, CHANDPUR (10-5-1925) 74
35 SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, CHANDPUR (10-5-1925) 76
36 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHANDPUR (10-5-1925) 76
37 LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA (On or after 10-5-1925) 77
38 A WORKER'S DIFFICULTY (11-5-1925) 78
39 INTERVIEW TO HARDAYAL NAG (Before 12-5-1925) 80
40 LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR (12-5-1925) 88
41 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHITTAGONG (12-5-1925) 88
42 SPEECH TO STUDENTS, CHITTAGONG (13-5-1925) 92
43 SPEECH AT TRADERS' MEETING, CHITTAGONG (13-5-1925) 93
44 KHADDAR IN KARNATAK (14-5-1925) 93
45 NOTES (14-5-1925) 94
46 LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS (14-5-1925) 96
47 LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT (14-5-1925) 96
48 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (14-5-1925) 97
49 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NOAKHALI (14-5-1925) 97
50 INTERVIEW TO TEACHERS AT NOAKHALI (14-5-1925) 98
51 REPLY TO WOMEN'S ADDRESS, NOAKHALI (14-5-1925) 99
52 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COMILLA (15-5-1925) 99
53 SPEECH TO STUDENTS (15-5-1925) 100
54 REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS, COMILLA (15-5-1925) 101
55 TALK TO WORKERS OF VIKRAMPUR (15-5-1925) 102
56 INTERVIEW WITH A FRIEND (After 15-5-1925) 103
57 TALK TO A MUSLIM FRIEND (After 15-5-1925) 106
58 SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, COMILLA (16-5-1925) 107
59 POWER OF "RAMANAMA" (17-5-1925) 107
60 SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA (17-5-1925) 113
61 MY NOTES (17-5-1925) 116
62 LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI (17-5-1925) 119
63 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DACCA (17-5-1925) 120
64 TALK TO STUDENTS AT DACCA (17-5-1925) 122
65 SPEECH AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, SHYAMPUR (17-5-1925) 123
66 LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE (18-5-1925) 124
67 LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI (18-5-1925) 124
68 LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI (18-5-1925) 125
69 SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MYMENSINGH (19-5-1925) 125
70 SPEECH AT MYMENSINGH (19-5-1925) 126
71 TALK TO ZAMINDARS AT MYMENSINGH (19-5-1925) 128
72 A REMARKABLE ADDRESS (21-5-1925) 128
73 'ON THE VERGE OF IT' (21-5-1925) 131

74 NOTES (21-5-1925) 136
75 SPEECH TO UNTOUCHABLES, DINAJPUR (21-5-1925) 140
76 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DINAJPUR (21-5-1925) 140
77 SPEECH TO STUDENTS, DINAJPUR (21-5-1925) 141
78 INTERVIEW AT DINAJPUR (21-5-1925) 141
79 SPEECH AT WORKERS' SCHOOL, BOGRA (22-5-1925) 143
80 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOGRA (22-5-1925) 144
81 SPEECH AT TALODA (22-5-1925) 145
82 LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA (23-5-1925) 145
83 BENGAL'S SACRIFICE (24-5-1925) 146
84 MY NOTES (24-5-1925) 148
85 NEEDLESS EXPENDITURE (24-5-1925) 151
86 MESSAGE TO "FORWARD" (25-5-1925) 155
87 LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR (25-5-1925) 156
88 NOTES (28-5-1925) 156
89 RYOTS' CRY (28-5-1925) 158
90 THE DRAWBACKS (28-5-1925) 159
91 NATIONAL SERVICE AND PAY (28-5-1925) 161
92 NOTES (28-5-1925) 162
93 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA (28-5-1925) 168
94 LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS (29-5-1925) 170
95 LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (30-5-1925) 171
96 INTERVIEW WITH RABINDRANATH TAGORE (30-5-1925) 172
97 MY NOTES (31-5-1925) 173
98 ENTERING VILLAGES (31-5-1925) 177
99 SPINNING IN BENGAL (31-5-1925) 178
100 LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH (31-5-1925) 179
101 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (31-5-1925) 180
102 SPEECH AT SANTINIKETAN (31-5-1925) 181
103 INTERVIEW TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO (31-5-1925) 182
104 LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO (1-6-1925) 185
105 LETTER TO JITENDRANATH KUSARY (1-6-1925) 186
106 LETTER TO S. A. VAZE (1-6-1925) 186
107 SPEECH AT BHOWANIPUR, CALCUTTA (2-6-1925) 187
108 VYKOM (4-6-1925) 187
109 KHADI PRATISHTHAN (4-6-1925) 190
110 NOTES (4-6-1925) 193
111 FLOOD RELIEF (4-6-1925) 199
112 DRAFT OF LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT (4-6-1925) 201
113 LETTER TO NISHITHNATH KUNDU (6-6-1925) 202
114 LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (6-6-1925) 203
115 SPEECH TO WOMEN MISSIONARIES (6-6-1925) 203
116 INVASION IN THE NAME OF RELIGION (7-6-1925) 206

117 IN BENGAL (7-6-1925) 209
118 KHADI IN KATHIAWAR (7-6-1925) 213
119 A NOTE OF ADVICE (7-6-1925) 214
120 LETTER TO THE EDITOR, "THE WORLD" (8-6-1925) 214
121 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JALPAIGURI (10-6-1925) 215
122 TALK TO VOLUNTEERS, JALPAIGURI (10-6-1925) 215
123 NOTES (11-6-1925) 216
124 NOT MAN'S WORK? (11-6-1925) 219
125 AYURVEDIC SYSTEM (11-6-1925) 221
126 LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (11-6-1925) 224
127 LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT (11-6-1925) 224
128 SPEECH TO STUDENTS, NAWABGANJ (11-6-1925) 225
129 REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK (12-6-1925) 225
130 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (12-6-1925) 226
131 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHOJESWAR (12-6-1925) 228
132 LETTER TO C. R. DAS (Before 13-6-1925) 229
133 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADARIPUR (13-6-1925) 230
134 SPEECH AT PUBLIC LIBRARY, MADARIPUR (13-6-1925) 230
135 ABOUT "ANTYAJAS" (14-6-1925) 231
136 VIRTUES OF A VOLUNTEER (14-6-1925) 233
137 MY DUTY (14-6-1925) 236
138 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BARISAL (14-6-1925) 238
139 REMARKS TO FATHER STRONG (14-6-1925) 239
140 LETTER TO RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP (On or before 15-6-1925) 239
141 LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU (15-6-1925) 240
142 LETTER TO ANTOINETTE MIRBEL (15-6-1925) 241
143 LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE (15-6-1925) 241
144 COMMENTS ON A LETTER (Before 16-6-1925) 242
145 TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI (17-6-1925) 245
146 TELEGRAM TO BASANTI DEVI DAS (17-6-1925) 245
147 TELEGRAM TO SATCOURIPATI ROY (17-6-1925) 245
148 TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI (17-6-1925) 246
149 TELEGRAM TO MONA DAS (17-6-1925) 246
150 TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (17-6-1925) 247
151 TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU (17-6-1925) 247
152 TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI (17-6-1925) 247
153 TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, VYKOM (17-6-1925) 248
154 AN APPEAL (17-6-1925) 248
155 THE GREAT BEREAVEMENT (17-6-1925) 249
156 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KHULNA (17-6-1925) 249
157 NOTES (18-6-1925) 252
158 ARE WE READY? (18-6-1925) 257

159 A DOMESTIC CHAPTER (18-6-1925) 259
160 TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU (18-6-1925) 262
161 TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR (On or after 18-6-1925) 262
162 LONG LIVE DESHBANDHU! (19-6-1925) 263
163 SUGGESTION FOR MEMORIAL SERVICE (19-6-1925) 266
164 LETTER TO THE PRESS (19-6-1925) 267
165 CHITTARANJAN DAS (20-6-1925) 267
166 NEED FOR PROTECTION (21-6-1925) 270
167 PURIFYING FLAME (21-6-1925) 273
168 APPEAL FOR DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND (22-6-1925) 275
169 APPEAL FOR DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND (22-6-1925) 276
170 LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH (22-6-1925) 277
171 LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT (22-6-1925) 278
172 LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (22-6-1925) 278
173 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS (23-6-1925) 279
174 INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN" (Before 24-6-1925) 280
175 INTERVIEW TO "THE SEARCHLIGHT" (Before 24-6-1925) 281
176 LETTER TO S. K. RUDRA (24-6-1925) 282
177 INTERVIEW TO "THE ENGLISHMAN" (24-6-1925) 282
178 NOTES (25-6-1925) 283
179 PLEA FOR HUMILITY (25-6-1925) 288
180 FALLEN SISTERS (25-6-1925) 290
181 THREE QUESTIONS (25-6-1925) 292
182 DUTY OF SATYAGRAHIS (25-6-1925) 293
183 LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF BURDWAN (26-6-1925) 294
184 LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI (26-6-1925) 294
185 SPEECH AT CONDOLENCE MEETING, CALCUTTA (26-6-1925) 295
186 APPEAL REGARDING DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL SERVICE (27-6-1925) 296
187 FIRST OF JULY (28-6-1925) 297
188 SOME MEMORIES (28-6-1925) 298
189 EXPERIMENT IN KATHIAWAR (28-6-1925) 301
190 LONG LIVE DESHBANDHU! (28-6-1925) 302
191 "GANGA-SWARUP" BASANTI DEVI (28-6-1925) 306
192 WHO IS TO BLAME? (28-6-1925) 310
193 LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS (29-6-1925) 310
194 LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI (29-6-1925) 311
195 LETER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (29-6-1925) 312
196 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (29-6-1925) 312
197 TELEGRAM TO SUDHIR RUDRA (30-6-1925) 313
198 SPEECH AT UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, CALCUTTA (30-6-1925) 313
199 APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND (1-7-1925) 314

200 SPEECH ON THE "SHRADDHA" DAY OF C. R. DAS (1-7-1925) 315
201 A STRING OF QUESTIONS (2-7-1925) 318
202 MY INCAPACITY (2-7-1925) 320
203 NOTES (2-7-1925) 323
204 DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND (2-7-1925) 327
205 RAINING BANGLES (2-7-1925) 329
206 ADVICE TO HINDUS (2-7-1925) 330
207 STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA (2-7-1925) 330
208 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KHARAGPUR (4-7-1925) 332
209 DIFFICULT SITUATIONS (5-7-1925) 332
210 LEARNING AND ENJOYING (5-7-1925) 335
211 MY NOTES (5-7-1925) 336
212 LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI (6-7-1925) 339
213 LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI (7-7-1925) 340
214 SPEECH TO STUDENTS, MIDNAPUR (7-7-1925) 341
215 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANKURA (8-7-1925) 342
216 NOTES (9-7-1925) 343
217 PAINFULLY ILLUMINATING (9-7-1925) 346
218 'THE SCIENCE OF SURRENDER' (9-7-1925) 348
219 A SILENT SERVANT (9-7-1925) 350
220 CHANCE OF PEACE (9-7-1925) 351
221 NOT TWO RACES (9-7-1925) 352
222 SPEECH AT SWARAJIST COUNCILLORS' MEETING, CALCUTTA (9-7-1925) 353
223 AT DARJEELING (10-7-1925) 354
224 LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI (10-7-1925) 361
225 GURDWARA LEGISLATION (11-7-1925) 361
226 THIS IS SELF-CONTROL UNDER COMPULSION (12-7-1925) 362
227 STOP PUBLISHING "NAVAJIVAN" (12-7-1925) 364
228 KHADI PRATISHTHAN (12-7-1925) 368
229 MY NOTES (12-7-1925) 369
230 ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK (12-7-1925) 370
231 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJSHAHI (12-7-1925) 370
232 LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT (13-7-1925) 371
233 REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE (On or before 14-7-1925) 372
234 A PLEA FOR TRUTH (16-7-1925) 373
235 WHAT IS TAMMANY HALL? (16-7-1925) 375
236 CALCUTTA'S MAYOR (16-7-1925) 377
237 NOTES (16-7-1925) 380
238 TO REMOVE A MISGIVING (16-7-1925) 383
239 LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (16-7-1925) 384
240 LETTER TO W. H. PITT (16-7-1925) 385

241 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (16-7-1925) 386
242 RESOLUTIONS AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING (16-7-1925) 386
243 SPEECH AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING (16-7-1925) 387
244 SPEECH AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING (17-7-1925) 388
245 A DECEPTIVE SPEECH (18-7-1925) 389
246 MY NOTES (19-7-1925) 392
247 WHEN CAN WE RISE? (19-7-1925) 394
248 NATIONAL EDUCATION (19-7-1925) 397
249 LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU (19-7-1925) 398
250 LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI (20-7-1925) 399
251 LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD (21-7-1925) 399
252 AN ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL (On or before 22-7-1925) 400
253 APPEAL FOR ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL (22-7-1925) 402
254 LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI (22-7-1925) 403
255 LETTER TO KRISHNADAS (22-7-1925) 404
256 LETTER TO NISHITHNATH KUNDU (22-7-1925) 405
257 THE SPINNING FRANCHISE (23-7-1925) 405
258 FRUIT OF SUPPRESSION (23-7-1925) 407
259 NOTES (23-7-1925) 408
260 SPEECH AT MARWARI AGRAWAL CONFERENCE, CALCUTTA (Before 24-7-1925) 411
261 LETTER TO MADELEINE SLADE (24-7-1925) 414
262 LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA (24-7-1925) 415
263 SPEECH ON KRISTODAS PAL (24-7-1925) 416
264 SPEECH AT EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION MEETING (24-7-1925) 418
265 MY DUTY (26-7-1925) 421
266 ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL (26-7-1925) 425
267 MISCELLANEOUS (26-7-1925) 427
268 MESSAGE TO "FORWARD" (27-7-1925) 429
269 LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI (27-7-1925) 429
270 LETTER TO D. HANUMANT RAO (28-7-1925) 430
271 LETTER TO W. H. PITT (28-7-1925) 431
272 LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (28-7-1925) 432
273 LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR (28-7-1925) 432
274 LETTER TO FRED E. CAMPBELL (28-7-1925) 433
275 SPEECH AT MEETING OF MISSIONARIES (28-7-1925) 434
276 APPEAL FOR ALL-BENGAL DESHBANDHU FUND (29-7-1925) 440
277 LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI (29-7-1925) 441
278 SPEECH AT MEETING OF ANGLO-INDIANS (29-7-1925) 442
279 NOTES (30-7-1925) 449
280 CONGRESS AND POLITICAL PARTIES (30-7-1925) 455
281 THE CONGRESS UNEMPLOYED (30-7-1925) 458

282 AGRICULTURE *v.* KHADDAR (30-7-1925) 460

283 STATEMENT TO THE PRESS (30-7-1925) 461

284 LETTER TO "THE STATESMAN" (31-7-1925) 462

285 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA (31-7-1925) 464

APPENDICES

I LETTER FROM JOGENDRA SINGH 466

II LETTER FROM B. C. CHATTERJEE 468

III LETTER FROM W. H. PITT 470

IV LETTER FROM K. KELAPPAN NAIR 472

V LETTER FROM MOTILAL NEHRU 473

VI LETTER FROM MADELEINE SLADE 474

SOURCES 476

CHRONOLOGY 477

INDEX OF TITLES 481

INDEX 484

ILLUSTRATIONS

IN 1925 — *frontispiece*

WITH ANDREWS AND TAGORE — *facing* p. 176

WITH C. R. DAS AND MAHADEV DESAI — 177

STATE

1. *MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE*

There is no use of glorifying me. If you really wish to please me, follow my advice.

I beg all people, ladies and gentlemen, to buy khaddar as much as your purse can permit.

A few coppers may not mean much to you, but they mean everything to those poor villagers.

M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-5-1925

2. *INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"*

CALCUTTA,
May 1, 1925

In a room practically devoid of furniture, on the floor of which were spread lengths of carpet, Mr. Gandhi, clad only in loin-cloth, sat cross-legged and, after a greeting, asked to be excused while his spinning-wheel was adjusted. He then expressed his readiness to converse, and proceeded to do so, spinning rapidly and skilfully the while.

Seldom taking his eyes from his work, he answered questions without the slightest hesitation, although his voice, soft and musical, was sometimes almost inaudible through the gentle whirr of the charkha. At the outset he smilingly acquiesced in a suggestion that the charkha was the machine on which he pinned his political faith.

Mr. Gandhi was first invited to express an opinion regarding the attitude of Europeans in the present political situation and the difficulty which many people experienced in defining a clear-cut policy from the maze of political panaceas enunciated from time to time.

He replied that there must be some organization to guide political thought and the National Congress ought to represent the national feeling. There were two sides to the present programme—the internal and the external. The object of the former was to achieve unity among all races, "Hindu-Muslim unity" being a short term to cover all classes—the removal of untouchability by the Hindus, the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

On the external side, there was the activity in the Council represented by the Swaraj Party, which was an integral part of the National Congress. That was the whole of the national programme.

Asked to express his opinion on the general political situation in India, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I am certainly not a pessimist, but I do not see much sign of hope. I shall begin to hope when we meet with demonstrable success in our internal programme. . . . meaning thereby the unity of all races in India, the removal of untouchability and the development of spinning and the use of khaddar.

As a declared "friend of the British", Mr. Gandhi regretted that he was unable to see a change of heart on their part.

Europeans may well co-operate on the internal as well as on the external side, and I invite them, as I have always invited them, to examine the programme in both its aspects. As regards the external side, if they are satisfied that we mean what we say, that we have absolutely no desire, even if we could, to drive out the English, or to end the British connection they should make common cause with us.

Touching on the question of non-co-operation, Mr. Gandhi said:

The programme of non-co-operation, so far as the nation is concerned, is suspended, but so far as I am personally concerned, it is not suspended, although the individual suspension had little meaning in it today. I never was a Council-goer, but I suppose at the present moment with me it is a virtue of necessity, because my late imprisonment debars my entry into the Councils. I had long suspended my practice, but the Society of the Inner Temple has removed the last vestige of temptation from me.[1]

What, therefore, remains of non-co-operation in me is, as Mr. Das[2] would put it, a matter of "mental attitude". But it is an attitude that I personally prize because, claiming as I do, to be a friend of the British, I want to tell them that I see no trace yet of any real change of heart.

I am a born co-operator, but non-co-operation with me became a necessity; but I am waiting for the opportunity when I can declare that I will again become a hearty co-operator.

Referring to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, Mr. Gandhi said:

My travels have shown me that both communities are filled with mutual distrust and fear, but I have not a shadow of doubt

[1] By striking his name off the rolls; *vide* Vol. XXIII, Appendix IV.

[2] Chitta Ranjan Das (1870-1925); eminent lawyer and Congress leader; orator and author; President, Indian National Congress, 1922; founded the Swaraj Party in 1923

that unity is coming in the near future. Each party regards it as a national necessity.

Mr. Gandhi added that there might be a clash before that came about, but whether they escaped that calamity or had to face it, unity was eventually a certainty.

On the subject of Mr. Das's manifesto and his terms on which a settlement might be reached, Mr. Gandhi said:

I prefer to say nothing until I have had a consultation with Mr. Das. But I can say generally that I am bound under the agreement, and even without it, not to embarrass the Swaraj Party or Mr. Das personally in their political activity.

Asked to give his views regarding His Excellency the Viceroy's[1] visit to England, Mr. Gandhi said:

I know nothing of the nature of the negotiations and I do not want to go by the newspapers, especially as I have become, again of necessity, an indifferent reader of newspapers and bazaar talk had never interested me. I do not know what Lord Reading's mission is, I do not know the implications in Lord Birkenhead's[2] speech, much less do I know what is going on behind the curtain.

The Statesman, 2-5-1925

3. *INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS*

CALCUTTA,
May 1, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi was spinning when a representative of the Associated Press called on him this afternoon. Referring to the Das-Birkenhead discussions, Mahatmaji refused to make any statement until he had seen Mr. Das personally. He did not want to embarrass his position by any statement at present:

I have come to Bengal not to hinder, but to help Mr. Das, as far as it lies in my power.

As regards the object of his extended visit to Bengal, Mr. Gandhi said he had come here to study the possibility of Bengal so far as khadi is concerned, to study the untouchability problem and to know the Hindu-Muslim relations here. He had been for a long time under a promise to visit certain places in

[1] Lord Reading (1860-1935); Chief Justice of England, 1913-21; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1921-26; Foreign Secretary, 1931

[2] Secretary of State for India, 1924-28

Bengal. As soon as he finished his Southern India tour he took the first opportunity of coming to Bengal. Mahatmaji said that he was feeling well and he expressed confidence that he would be able to fulfil his Bengal programme.

Asked by the representative what attitude he would take if more power was given to the transferred department and the probable date of Dominion Status was announced, Mr. Gandhi smilingly replied:

Why should I accept a mere supposition when I know that I can see Mr. Das tomorrow and discuss with him?

The Hindu, 2-5-1925

4. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA*[1]

May 1, 1925

FRIENDS,

I have spoken sufficiently in Hindusthani and I hope that a large part of this audience has followed my broken Hindusthani. It is always a matter of deep grief to me that, whenever I go to the South or I come to Bengal, I am obliged in order to be able to make myself understood by my educated countrymen to speak in English. I wish that the people of the South and the people of Bengal would rid themselves of this laziness and make up their minds once for all to add to a knowledge of their own mother tongue a passable knowledge of Hindi or Hindusthani which, and which alone, can become the language of internal commerce in India. Let English be, as it ought to be, language of international diplomacy, the language of intercourse between all the different nations of the world. But English can never usurp the function that specially belongs to Hindi or Hindusthani. You ought to know that nearly twenty crores of the people of India can understand my broken Hindusthani. Let it not be said that ten crores of India want to impose their speech or English speech on the twenty crores of India.

I have said in my opening remarks what a deep grief it was to me this morning to enter 148 Russa Road. I know that that house no longer belonged to Deshbandhu Das. I knew that he contemplated making over that beautiful mansion to trustees in order to divest himself of the last vestige of wealth that he possessed in this world. But, man of the world, living still in the

[1] The meeting, held at Mirzapur Park, was attended by about 10,000 persons. Dr. P. C. Ray presided.

world as I am doing, when I actually entered the house with the knowledge that its distinguished owner had voluntarily dispossessed himself of it, I could not help shedding a tear. I felt a wrench within me that the house was no longer Das's, and when I heard that he had not yet been able to repair his broken-down constitution, I felt doubly grieved and my grief was still further increased when I received a brief but beautiful and loving message from him, written by him in pencil hand, telling me how it was impossible for him to stand the double strain and why therefore he had gone away to Faridpur in advance. May God grant him health and long life to serve the country which he loves so dearly.

You will not expect me to tell you anything on what is called the political situation. A newspaper reporter told me today about the negotiations that are going on between Lord Birkenhead and Deshbandhu Das. I am totally unaware of any such negotiations. I have no knowledge of any such negotiations whatsoever; but I do know that there is what may be called a political situation in this country today. But that political situation does not interest me sufficiently today. I am an economist of time; I have deliberately given my general power of attorney to the Swaraj Party which is an integral part of the Congress. The Swaraj Party is in charge of the political programme of the Congress and, seeing that I have the fullest faith in the ability of the Swaraj Party to handle the political situation, seeing that I have the fullest faith in the wisdom of Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru[1], so far as the Council programme is concerned, it would be impudence on my part to concern myself about it unless they want me to do so and there is absolutely no reason for them to want my interference or to desire my opinion. When they do so you may depend on it that I am always at their service but, what is more, it would be impossible for me to make any effective statement on the political situation unless I have had a consultation with Deshbandhu Das. I have not come to Bengal, I am not travelling throughout the length and breadth of India to embarrass the Swaraj Party or to embarrass Deshbandhu or a single member of that party. I am pledged in the name of God to help that party to the best of my ability. I am pledged not even mentally to interfere with its programme and, if I do not throw myself heart and soul into

[1] 1861-1931; lawyer and Swarajist leader; President, Indian National Congress, Amritsar, 1919, and Calcutta, 1928

that programme, it is because of my limitations, it is because I do not see eye to eye with them in their policy. But that does not mean that I must not help them. That does not mean that their policy is inimical to the country. It simply means that there is a difference of opinion as to the weight and the relative importance to be attached to the political programme and the constructive programme. I swear by the constructive programme; the more I examine myself the more I feel that I am more fitted for handling the constructive programme for developing our own power from within than for engaging into diplomatic relations with the matchless diplomats from England. I confess to you that I will be ill at ease in carrying on negotiations with any of those officials unless I feel that we have power from within and I am here to confess to you that we have lost today the power that we thought in 1921 we had in abundance, and therefore I propose to the best of my ability to concentrate solely and exclusively upon the constructive programme. That will be my best contribution to the country and to the Swaraj Party, and I promise to you that if you, the young men and the young women of Bengal, will help me—no matter to what political party you may belong—if you will kindly help me in making this constructive programme a living, a swinging success, you will find that our fetters automatically drop. You will find that those whom we consider unjustly incarcerated and kept under detention, that those who are today pining away in the Jail at Mandalay, you will find that, if you can make the constructive programme a success, they will be discharged without your asking for their discharge. What is that constructive programme by which I swear? Let me take you through these three items as rapidly as I can. Hindu-Muslim unity, meaning unity between all the races that inhabit the fair land of ours. Is that programme unattainable by us? Is that programme undesirable? But I have admitted my incompetence. I have admitted that I have been found wanting as a physician prescribing a cure for this malady. I do not find that either the Hindus or the Mussalmans are ready to accept my cure and therefore I simply nowadays confine myself to a passing mention of this problem and content myself by saying that some day or other we Hindus and Mussalmans will have to come together if we want the deliverance of our country; and, if it is to be our lot that before we can come together, we must shed one another's blood then I say the sooner we do so the better it is for us. If we propose to break one another's head, let us do so in a manly

way, let us not then shed crocodile tears, let us not ask for sympathy from any quarter if you do not propose to give any quarter. That is what I have to say about the Hindu-Muslim unity.

Is it a long-drawn-out programme or an impossible programme that we Hindus should rid ourselves of the curse of untouchability? So long as untouchability disfigures Hinduism, so long do I hold the attainment of swaraj to be an utter impossibility. Supposing it would be a gift descending from Downing Street to India that gift would be a curse upon this holy land. If we do not get rid of this curse, it would be a curse added to curse, swaraj without the freedom of the untouchables. But what are the implications of this removal of untouchability? Let the *sanatani* Hindus understand from me who claims to be a *sanatani* Hindu. I do not ask you to inter-dine with anybody; I do not ask you to exchange your daughters with the untouchables or with anybody, but I do ask you to remove this curse so that you may not put him beyond the pale of service. For me the removal of untouchability is the acceptance of the privilege of service to people whom we have kept under bondage in the sacred name of religion. Listen to me the *sanatani* Hindus of Calcutta, that this Hinduism is in the balance and it will go down to perdition if you do not get rid of this untouchability. So much and so far for untouchability.

Then take the third item in your programme, the spinning-wheel and the khaddar. What do I ask of you? The millionaires of Calcutta, the barristers, the M.L.A.s and the M.L.C.s of Calcutta, what do I ask of you? The women of Calcutta, what do I ask of you? Half an hour, in the name of God, for the sake of perishing and famishing humanity of India. Is it too much for you to give half an hour of your time to doing that—to spinning for the sake of these poor people so that you can cheapen khaddar, so that I can tell the villagers of Bengal that the daughters and sons of millionaires are spinning? Why will you not spin? Do you know that the villagers have lost faith in us, in themselves and in God Himself? Because they find that we often go to them, sometimes to collect money, sometimes with one programme and sometimes with another programme. They do not know where we want to lead them and so they are distrustful of us and when we take in our simplicity, the spinning-wheel to their homes, they smile at us the smile of no-confidence. They do not say: "We do not understand this instrument of yours. We do not know what meaning lies behind the spinning-wheel." So when the villagers have forgotten the use and the beauty, the

life-giving beauty of the spinning-wheel, they do not take to it kindly. If you want them to take to this home industry of yours kindly, then it is necessary for you to spin the wheel yourself. And remember again that, unless you take to spinning yourselves, you will not be able to make necessary improvements on it, you will not be able to re-establish this almost lost industry of India. No agricultural country in the world has yet lived which has not added a supplementary industry to it. And I defy any Indian, no matter how distinguished an economist he may be to show me an effective substitute for the millions of India who are scattered all over the land which is 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad and scattered in 700 thousand villages most of which are outside even the railway tracts. I defy anybody to propose or to show any effective substitute. But till such an effective substitute is placed before you, do not idle away your time, do not grudge the poor, down-trodden humanity of India, the half an hour that I ask of you, the Congress asks of you. And then, if you take to the spinning-wheel, what about its product? Why is this spinning-wheel a necessity? Because we want clothes made not in Manchester or Japan, made not in Ahmedabad or Bombay which did not stand Bengal in good stead at the time of Partition, but we want beautiful khaddar manufactured in our own village homes which always stands us in good stead. We want the villagers to be smiling with plenty; we want the people of Khulna, when again they have got famine, to know that they are not to live on doles of rice thrown at their face by a Dr. Ray[1], but I want the people of Khulna to feel that they do not need the assistance of even a Ray, because they have got the spinning-wheel to fall back upon. Let them not become beggars when they have got ready in their hands an instrument of living, an instrument which shall be an insurance, a permanent insurance against famine. That is why I ask you to take up the spinning-wheel and khaddar and that is what has brought me to Bengal.

I do not want to interfere with the politics of Bengal or India today. There are men who are able enough to handle it, but I regard myself as a charkha expert; I regard myself as a khaddar expert. I believe that I have something to say to every man and woman in connection with this message of khaddar, and therefore, while I have yet life left in me, whilst Bengal is yet ready and willing to listen to me, I want to re-deliver my mes-

[1] Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861-1944); professor of Chemistry at Presidency college, Calcutta; author of *History of Hindu Chemistry*; educationist and patriot

sage to Bengal with all the power at my command and say if you want freedom for your country do anything else you like but at least lay a firm and stable foundation on which you will be able to erect a proper and firm structure, and remember the words of this old man speaking to you again and again in Calcutta and will speak again and again throughout his tour in Bengal that, if you do not lay this sure and certain foundation, remember that any reform that you get, any liberty or freedom that you think you possess will be nothing but a house built of cards which is going to topple down under the first gust of wind. Therefore, I pray of you to work up this message, the living message of khaddar and spinning-wheel. Hindus, remove this curse of untouchability. Hindus and Mussalmans, if it is at all possible for you without shedding a drop of blood, do come together and embrace each other as brothers in arms.

I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-5-1925

5. *SPEECH AT INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION, FARIDPUR*

May 2, 1925

In declaring the exhibition open Mr. Gandhi said, as a son of a cultivator, he claimed to know something of agriculture. He had considerable experience of the peasantry of India and of South Africa where he had spent more than 20 years of his life. He had seen working in Agricultural Departments in these two countries and he could say that this department was anxious to help even ordinary poor peasants. Unfortunately, nothing was practically done in this direction. It had been said, though he did not agree, that peasantry of India were lethargic. In fact he admitted they remained idle for about 6 months in the year. This was not because they were lethargic but because they had no work to do. They could very well take to spinning during these months and thus ameliorate their condition. He was prepared to proclaim with all emphasis that he could command that the salvation of India lay in the spinning-wheel. There could be no difference of opinion about it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-5-1925

6. *SPEECH AT ALL-BENGAL HINDU SAMMELAN*[1]

FARIDPUR,
May 2, 1925

I am requested by President to address you on three things. Firstly, Hindu-Muslim unity is a vital question on which I have bestowed a good deal of thought. I pray to God that He might give us the peace we so much desire. Now the Hindus and Muslims are at loggerheads and fighting bitterly and there is no unity of heart; I tried my best to bring about the unity and I am not ashamed to own my failure. I only wished they fought like men, but of course not go to court and then only know that one community cannot exterminate the other nor the whole of India can be converted either into Hinduism or Mahommedanism. Thus the much-desired-for unity will come automatically.

As regards untouchability, my views are well-known and I have spoken from a thousand platforms. I believe that so long as there is untouchability among Hindus no good can come to them. It is a great sin and has no religious sanction behind it. How can Hindus be great when they condemn millions of their brothers as untouchables? I therefore appeal to everybody present here to remove the blot of untouchability and induce others to do so. The removal of untouchability does never mean destruction of *varnashrama*[2] dharma which is a very beautiful and beneficial thing and never a bad one. But I know, in the name of *varnashrama* dharma, many wrongs are being done which must be removed. This does not mean that we are to inter-dine and inter-marry amongst each other. You must never forget the distinction between untouchability and *varnashrama* dharma.

As regards charkha and khaddar, charkha is the life of Hindustan and I have compared it to the *Sudarshan Chakra* and *Kamdhenu*. The destruction of charkha meant the beginning of poverty in India, and to drive [away] poverty we must reinstate charkha in its proper place. Charkha should be given the first place in Indian homes. Let the wheel be plied in every home

[1] P. C. Ray, who presided over the second session of the Sammelan requested Gandhiji to speak "on the burning questions of the day". Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

[2] The division of society into four *varnas* or castes and of the individual life into four ashramas or stages

every day for half an hour in the name of God for the salvation of his or her starving brothers. The educated people should first adopt it so that others may follow. When, in the morning, I opened the industrial exhibition, I noticed many defects in construction of the spinning[-wheel] which can only be remedied by the educated applying their brains to it. You know the improved wheels, I mean the mills of Manchester, they spelt disaster for the Indian masses and it is my earnest desire that no home should be without charkha. I appeal to you to wear khaddar. Four years ago when I visited Dacca, my heart yearned for the Dacca muslin which is now made of foreign yarn coming from England or Japan. Wear such khaddar as your place produces. The other day a young Bengali girl named Aparna Devi, who could spin very fine counts of thread, came to see me and I rather considered myself fortunate enough to see her. I appeal to Bengali ladies to exert themselves so that they might clothe their husbands and sons with fine khadi.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-5-1925

7. *SPEECH AT BENGAL PROVINCIAL YOUNGMEN'S CONFERENCE*

May 2, 1925

The President[1] requested Mahatmaji to speak a few words of advice to the young hopefuls of the country assembled there. Mahatmaji spoke for a pretty long time and, in the course of his speech, referred to the part played by the youth in the regeneration of the country. He was tired of speeches, he said, but wanted to have a heart-to-heart talk with them. Young men should banish all evil thoughts from their mind and the motto of their life should be service, or, in one word, the indispensable condition of life should be *brahmacharya* and the message of *brahmacharya* was not confined to the Hindu religion only—it was, in fact, the corner-stone of all religions in all ages. He then cited the instance of a certain brilliant young man who had been spoilt for ever for want of *brahmacharya*, and wanted an assurance from every one of them that they would lead a pure life.

He then referred to Non-co-operation movement as nothing but a movement for self-purification and advised them to surrender themselves completely to God's will. He thereupon passed on to what he described as his eternal message, viz., khaddar, removal of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity. He emphasized the capacity of the charkha as a means of concentration

[1] Jitendra Mohan Roy

and self-purification—two things essentially necessary at the present moment. He blessed the young men and prayed to God so that they might act up to the noble traditions of India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1925

8. *TALK WITH UNTOUCHABLES*

FARIDPUR,
[On or before *May 3, 1925*][1]

Gandhiji first sought information about "untouchability" in Bengal, and he was told about the different sections—*Shahas, Kaivartas, Namasudras* and *Mehtars*—and the canker of superiority that had entered even amongst these sub-sections. Then he asked about the disabilities they had to undergo. The gentleman admitted that there was no untouchability of the kind we find in West or South India, but the feeling of superiority was there. A *Namasudra* could enter the house of a "superior Hindu", but could not enter the room where water was kept; no Hindu would accept water at his hands; he would not be allowed to enter a temple, he could not get the services of a barber or a washerman. "How are we to remedy these disabilities, Sir?" he asked.

That's a nice question that you have asked. Now there are ways and ways. There are some who would use violence against the offending party and wrest reform from them. I met such friends in Poona. They wanted to present an address to me. It was not in Marathi or Hindi but in English, as the function was arranged by an English-knowing lad who claimed to be their leader. In the address they said that, if the higher classes did not mend their behaviour towards them, they would use physical force and teach them a lesson. That is one way. I told them that that was the surest way to lose all sympathy of sober men and to defeat the ends they wanted to achieve, as also to frustrate the efforts of the reformers to help them. There is another class of people—I met them in the South—who threaten to leave Hinduism and take to Christianity or Islam. I said to them that, if they had any religion in them, it was only now that it was on trial and, if they renounced it because they were ill-treated, their religion was not worth a moment's purchase. I was excommunicated, and I think wrongly, when I went to England, but for that reason, should I have renounced my religion? The third way

[1] Gandhiji was at Faridpur from May 1 to May 4. May 4 being a Monday was Gandhiji's silence day. This talk, therefore, must have been given on or before May 3.

and the only pure way, to my mind, is that of self-purification, i.e., being free from all the charges that are levelled against you.

I understand it all. Violence and the kind of threats you have described are no good, echoed the *vakil* friend.

Yes. Self-purification is the way. I wonder if you eat carrion?

No,—very few amongst us use meat at all. The *Vaishnavas* amongst us do not eat meat at all. We do eat fish though.

Well then; you have to do less than others by way of self-purification. What little there may be of the idea of superiority among yourselves you must get rid of. Try to rid yourselves of all that the orthodox Hindus have, perhaps with some reason, to say against you and you will overcome their prejudices. Not that they have no vices. But it is not yours to point the finger of scorn at them. It may be a long process, but it is a sure one. I know you can bring them to their knees by drastic measures at times. In cities like Calcutta, for instance, if the sweepers go on strike saying they would not resume work unless their disabilities are remedied, I am sure they would succeed, but the minds of the opposite party will not be changed. Their hatred will increase all the more. The only way is to be above reproach yourselves and leave the rest to reformers. As you know, I am fighting the evil with all the energy at my command. It is an entirely religious question for me.

You want us to trust the reformers. We trust you, but how may we trust the others? They talk of untouchability today because we are useful pawns in their political game, but the moment their political ends are achieved, they will leave us in the lurch. We do not think, in their heart of hearts they believe that it is a question of purifying themselves, nor that swaraj is useless without the removal of untouchability. Dr. Ray is there who, I admit, is fighting hard for us. His feeling for us is intense. But I am not sure of others. There is Deshbandhu Das, of course, but he too is hardly doing all that he could.

But I assure you he has nothing against you, and he wants the reform as much as I do. Do you know why he cannot interest himself in it as much as I?

I know, Sir. He has many things to do and he has hardly any time.

Yes, that is it. And there is another thing. He feels that no work can be done unless by swift political action we obtain our freedom. That is the only difference between him and me. But he is absolutely in earnest about the question, and he wants the removal of the curse as soon as you and I.

I agree. But, then, would you want us simply to rely on the reformers? You know it has so happened that whenever we have shown fight they have come down, and whenever we have sat supine they have looked on with unconcern,. . .[1] says we should refuse to have anything to do with them. Let us also refuse all social intercourse, let us refuse water from them as they refuse water from us.

He is hysterical, you know. Don't do anything of the kind. You will antagonize the caste Hindus all the more. You may not feel any love for them. But I do think you can rid yourselves of all hatred against them. Maintain a dignified attitude. Dignified attitude and not vindictiveness.

How can we join the national programme in these circumstances?

Why not? What is the national programme today? Removal of untouchability by the Hindus, khaddar and Hindu-Muslim unity. I think all the three items are calculated to help a solution of your difficulties. Even Hindu-Muslim unity means more or less a solution of the untouchability question too, and khaddar can unite us as nothing else can. Yes, if people come to you with schemes of swaraj in which there is no provision for you, and to which they want your assent just for the political exigencies of the hour, or if missionaries come to you with all sorts of schemes in which special rights are asked for you, you will be on your guard. You will brush both aside.

I have come across such missionaries and you are quite right. Our disabilities are various and we are handicapped almost everywhere.

They will end. There are many workers in the field. Many high-class Hindus are devoting all their time and energy to the question. And you have to trust to the good sense inherent in human nature too. When you have purified yourselves, your opponents are bound to awaken to a sense of their duty. I have passed through the same disabilities as you in South Africa and I want you to do as I did. You know what I did? The European barbers refused to serve me. I got a pair of clippers one fine morning and began to crop my hair standing before a looking-glass. A European friend peeped in just then and found me in the midst of the operation. "What are you doing?" he said. "If European barbers won't serve me," I said, "I will serve myself." Then he offered his services, with the result that my hair was cropped in a most amusing fashion—patches of hair here, patches there and bare spaces in between![2] With regard to sending my

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. III, Ch. IX.

children to school there was the same difficulty. They said, an exception could be made in favour of my children who would be allowed to go to an English school. I said, "No, unless all Indian children with clean habits were free to go to English schools, I won't send mine." And I kept my children without school education, even incurring the charge that I was neglecting their education. Oh! There were any number of disabilities. I can feel as one of you because I have passed through exactly the same difficulties. I boarded a bus once and took my seat. For refusing to leave the seat that was given to me I was kicked and brutally mauled about. The other passengers were so alarmed at this man's behaviour that they remonstrated with him, and out of sheer shame he left me.[1] But you know that I lived down these prejudices in course of time, not by retaliation but by suffering. I verily believe that the treatment of our countrymen overseas is a just nemesis for the ill-treatment you receive in India. That is what I mean when I repeat everywhere that we have made ourselves pariahs in the Empire and that Hinduism will be blotted out of the face of the earth if we don't take care betimes and get rid of the curse.

I know, Sir, you have said that often, and one does feel like that. But untouchability has persisted so long. How will it be destroyed now?

Why? Was there not cannibalism in some parts, and the custom of Suttee, in India? Do you think Hinduism could have endured if those things had also persisted? They had to disappear. Thinking minds revolted against these horrors, and now that the consciousness of the horror of untouchability has been aroused everywhere, it is bound to go. The consciousness is growing upon every one of us that Hinduism is on its trial and if it is not to be found wanting, it must rid itself of the curse.

Then, you think we must join the Congress?

You should and help as much as you can in the national programme. Do the national work, take to the charkha and wear khaddar, and purify yourselves. Above all realize the inherent effectiveness and value of character. It is your character that will tell in the end.

"We are very thankful indeed and shall try to carry out the suggestions. Please pardon us for having troubled you at this late hour," said he, as they were taking their leave. Gandhi very cordially said:

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. IX.

No, it has been a perfect pleasure to me—this talk with you. Had it not been so, I should not have talked at such length with you.

Young India, 14-5-1925

9. *REPLY TO ADDRESS*[1]

[On or before *May 3, 1925*]

I thank you sincerely for the address you have given me, and more for the trouble you have taken to come here.[2] I sent the message half in jest and had hardly expected that you would respond to it. I am delighted that you have come. I wanted to give you a demonstration in spinning, an object-lesson, and explain to you that it was essential that you take up spinning as a religious duty to bring about the regeneration of the country. Today you see only a thread coming out as I turn the wheel and draw the sliver. But it is my conviction that, with every thread that I draw, I am spinning the destiny of India. The conviction is growing upon me that without the spinning-wheel there is no salvation for this country of ours, and I ask you, as I am turning the wheel, to set apart half an hour each day from your talking, writing or playing and devote it to spinning.

The evil of untouchability that has entered Hinduism and is eating into its vitals and killing the spirit of nationalism from within is more infectious than even the plague. It has affected the Parsis, the Christians and the Muslims, too, and in consequence all of us have become untouchables outside India. How can this evil be eradicated? I told the friend who met me that this can be done only by the efforts of the caste Hindus. He then told me frankly that he was afraid we might use the *Antyajas*[3] as pawns in the game, that after we had secured swaraj we might leave them to their fate. What would be their lot then, he asked. There was an element of truth in his criticism. We must assure people who think like him that there is no political motive in the movement for the uplift of the *Antyajas*, that the motive inspiring it is the religious one of doing one's duty and atoning for

[1] Presented by students who attended the Students' Conference in Faridpur; the first paragraph has been reproduced from *Young India*, 14-5-1925.

[2] The address was to have been presented in a theatre; Gandhiji, however, sent a message through J. B. Kripalani that he would like to receive the address at his camp where he was busy spinning. So the students went to Gandhiji's camp and presented the address there.

[3] Hindu communities traditionally regarded as untouchables

one's sins. If we do not pay this debt, we shall be guilty in the eyes of God and shall remain neither Hindus nor human beings.

A young man asked me what would happen to him if he should be excommunicated for working for *Antyaja* uplift. I told him that, if he had some standing in his community, I would be very happy to hear that he wa ;excommunicated. But we are not ready to sacrifice our position in society for such a cause. I visited a place in Kathiawar where thousands of people gave me the impression that they did not approve of the practice of untouchability. When leaving the place, I asked a friend, who is a very good worker, to visit it. He is a Brahmin, but he takes with him an *Antyaja* child so that it may help him in his work. That child is so clean in his habits that, upon seeing him, you would not notice any difference between him and the cleanest child among you. When I had asked those people to keep both these with them, they had felt happy because they needed such persons to serve the *Antyajas* of that town. But when the worker and the *Antyaja* child went there, the person who had invited them there got frightened and did not receive them. That was a moment of trial for him and he was found wanting. He failed and betrayed his Hinduism. I expect courage from you at such a time.

Moreover, eradication of untouchability does not mean destruction of the *varnashrama* system. Surely, you ought to understand this thing. It is not necessary for me, in order that I may serve humanity, to eat in the company of any person or to give my daughter in marriage to him. Neither Andrews[1] nor Shaukat Ali[2] eats with me, and yet I look upon them as more than my blood-brothers. I cannot eat with Shaukat Ali because he is a non-vegetarian. If I ate any type of food which Shaukat Ali regarded as forbidden, he too would not eat in my company, but that would make no difference at all to his love for me. Restrictions about eating and marrying do not come in the way of our serving others. Even if God should forbid me to serve a living being, I would disobey Him. But let me clarify a point further. I do not desire that you should eat or enter into marriage ties with *Antyajas* or the *Namasudras*[3], but I certainly want you to maintain the relations with them which you do with other Sudras. I have heard that Hindus do not accept water

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist, and a close associate of Gandhiji

[2] Shaukat Ali (1873-1938); Muslim leader who, along with his brother Mahomed Ali, took a leading part in the Khilafat movement

[3] A community in Bengal

from a *Namasudra*. If you can drink water offered by a Sudra, it is wrong not to accept it from a *Namasudra*. I heard that the *Namasudras* do not get the services of barbers and washermen. This is a crime against humanity. It is not a very noble sentiment which forbids you to serve a living creature.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1925

10. COW-PROTECTION

We have taken one step forward. The Bombay meeting[1] in Madhav Baug has approved by a majority the constitution of a body for cow-protection, which has been published in *Navajivan*. Four persons had raised their hands against the constitution. One of them wanted to oppose a particular clause in it. I could not permit him to do so. All I could do was to advise him that, if he objected to the principle underlying it, he should oppose the entire constitution, but that, if he had no objection to the principle, he should accept the constitution. It is my humble view that, at such meetings, we cannot go ahead with the work in any other way. I wish that everyone will understand the reason behind my ruling. The meeting was held in order to start a new body. It could have been inaugurated even without a public meeting, since the constitution was drawn up by a committee appointed by the Cow-protection conference[2] and it could have after adopting the constitution, proceeded immediately to set up the proposed All-India Cow-protection Society. Instead, to invest the event with greater importance a public meeting was convened for adopting the constitution. In such a meeting no one can oppose particular clauses. But anyone who does not approve of the proposed body or constitution has a right to oppose either, and as chairman I conceded that right to the person who had objected.

I wish to draw the reader's attention to my speech[3] (published elsewhere in this issue). To me the cause of cow-protection is dearer than anything else. It is my view that we have not given careful thought to this important problem of cow-protection. How can we stop the *adharma*[4] that is going on in the

[1] Held on April 28, 1925, with Gandhiji in the chair

[2] Held at Belgaum on December 28, 1924 under Gandhiji's chairmanship

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 555-8.

[4] Opposite of dharma

name of cow-protection? My reason does not function when I start thinking about it. Religious-minded Hindus donate lakhs of rupees for cow-protection, but their aim is not served. In a country in which protection of the cow is a sacred duty, the cow is least cared for! Neither cow-slaughter nor cruelty to the cow is stopped. Those who sell cows for being slaughtered are Hindus, as also those who inflict cruelty on them. Not a single measure out of the many adopted for cow-protection succeeds, or promises to succeed. Why is it so?

This all-India body must think about the problem. But whose responsibility will it be to think? Should the president or the secretary think or the committee as a whole deliberate about it? Thinking about the problem presupposes study. What is the condition of the cow and of the bullock? What is their number? Are they really a burden to the country, or are they put to service? What are the reasons for their being slaughtered? Why are they weak? These and many other related questions will have to be considered.

Who should spare the time? Is there anyone who takes so much interest? Unless people take interest, how can they accomplish anything? I explained, therefore, that cow-protection required *tapascharya*[1], restraint, study and so on. Hence I shall expect not only money from those who wish to serve the cause of cow-protection, but also thought and study.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-5-1925

11. MY NOTES

Kathiawar's Contribution

Shri Manilal Kothari has been touring Kathiawar to complete the collection of Rs. 20,000, which is its quota. According to a telegram from him, further contributions have been collected as under:

Other contributions from Manavadar	Rs.	1,100
Shri Jivanlal, Chorwad	,,	2,500
Other contributions from Chorwad	,,	200
Veraval	,,	2,500
Total	Rs.	6,300

I hope that Kathiawar will contribute its share within the allotted time. I am looking forward to receiving the contribution

[1] Voluntary suffering as moral discipline

of Kathiawaris residing in Bombay. I wish Kathiawaris to remember that this sum of Rs. 20,000 will be spent entirely in Kathiawar itself.

"Bondage of Caste"

I have accepted caste as conducive to self-control, but in this age we find it to be a bondage and not a means of self-control. Self-control gives dignity to a person and makes him free. Bondage, being like shackles, brings disgrace. Caste as understood at present is neither wholesome nor sanctioned by Shastras. The latter do not know the word "caste" in the sense in which it is used nowadays. They recognize *varnas*, but there are only four of them. Even among the innumerable communities there are sub-castes and we find a growing tendency to prohibit marriage between members of different sub-castes. These are signs not of progress but of degradation. These reflections have been prompted by the following letter:[1]

If true, this report is saddening. Why should there be fighting for the positions of president and secretary? Why should there be differences of *Surati*, *Agri*, *Damani*,[2] etc.? When I attended a meeting of the Lad Yuvak Mandal[3], I came away with a very good impression. Presidentship offers an opportunity for service, it cannot be used for acquiring honour. A secretary is the servant of the society. Even if there is a contest for that office, it should be a friendly one. I hope that the two parties will come together and end the conflict described above. Why should not all *Vaniks*[4] combine and form one single caste? Nowhere have I seen it laid down as dharma that members of Vaisya communities may not marry among themselves. I respect to some extent the division into sub-castes as a matter of social convenience. But when I come across instances like the one described above, I feel that we should actively shake ourselves free of these bonds and persuade others to do so.

Both "Idolater" and "Iconoclast"

I once said in a speech that I was both an idol-worshipper and an idol-breaker. If the speech in which I said this had been

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had stated that in his *Lad* community there were many sub-castes and differences of opinion became so grave, at times, as to lead to fighting.

[2] Names of the sub-castes of the Lad community

[3] Lad Youth Association

[4] Business communities

reported in full, my meaning would have been easy to understand. I have not seen its report. A correspondent quotes my remarks and writes:[1]

Here the word idol has different meanings. If we take it to mean a physical object of worship, I am an idol-breaker. If we take the word to mean an object which helps us in contemplation, or a means of showing honour or of cherishing a memory, I am an idol-worshipper. An idol does not mean merely a physical object. Those who blindly worship even a book are idol-worshippers or idolaters. To believe in everything which is supposed to be stated in the Vedas, without using our reason, without discriminating between the essential and inessential and trying to determine the meaning of the text—this is idol-worship and should be rejected—it is, in other words, idolatry. Tulsidas[2], who worshipped an idol in the presence of which he felt a thrill running through his limbs and became absorbed in the vision of God, of Rama, was pure in his idol-worship and, therefore, deserves to be revered and his example is worthy of being followed.

Superstition in every form is idolatry, that is, idol-worship which deserves to be condemned. Those who believe in any tradition as sacred are idol-worshippers of this kind, and in respect of them I am an idol-breaker. No one can convince me, with the help of quotations from Shastras, that untruth is truth, cruelty is kindness and hatred is love. In that sense I am an idol-breaker. I am an idol-breaker because no one can, by quoting ambiguous or interpolated stanzas or by holding out threats, persuade me to shun or slight the *Antyajas* or to regard them as untouchables. I can see the wrong even of my parents as wrong and, therefore, despite my great love for my country, I can see and publicly expose its evils, and hence, I am an idol-breaker. But generally I feel a very high and quite spontaneous veneration for the Vedas and other holy books; I can see God even in a piece of stone and, therefore, I instinctively bow my head before statues of saints; for this reason I regard myself as an idol-worshipper.

Thus, it is the emotions in the heart which are good or bad rather than outward actions. Every action is to be judged

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to explain his meaning for the benefit of persons like himself who had lost faith in idol-worship and yet respected it in some of its forms.

[2] A sixteenth-century Hindi poet, author of the *Ramacharitamanasa* (*Ramayana*)

by the emotion of the person acting. Touching one's mother with an impure emotion will send the son to hell, but touching the same mother with a pure emotion will take him to heaven. A wound inflicted with a knife through hatred will take the victim's life; a cut made with the same knife through love will save life. A cat's teeth which protect her kittens are fatal to a mouse.

There is nothing obnoxious in idol-worship as such; it is worship without understanding which is so.

Duty of Petlad Satyagrahis

When the struggle of Petlad satyagrahis ended happily, I was on tour and did not know about the result. Now I hear that some of the satyagrahis repudiate the resolution which was adopted by the leaders. If this is so, it is a matter for regret. The most important virtue of a soldier is that he should accept everything which the leader does even if his action is wrong, so long as he is acting in good faith. They have a right to remove him or repudiate his action only when it can be positively asserted that he has proved himself a traitor. If this rule is not observed, the nation's capacity for collective action will not last. Not only that, but the nation will cease to be a nation. In this particular incident, however, I see no error on the part of the leaders. The satyagraha was started not for the sake of monetary concessions but for a principle. Satyagraha can never be merely for monetary gain. There is always some principle behind it and, therefore, it is of universal benefit. I have before me the resolution concerning the Petlad satyagraha. From it I see that, according to the people's belief, the Revision Settlement was not lawful and their demand was merely that the Government of the Gaekwar should appoint a committee of officials to examine it. The people scored a victory the moment such a committee was appointed. That victory was even celebrated. There is nothing to be said from the point of view of principle against the final decision which has now been announced. The Dewan Saheb was courteous enough to invite the representatives, and he announced his decision after apprising them of it. One does not see much monetary gain in that decision. It would have been more welcome if it had contained such benefit. But the principle having been safeguarded, one cannot continue to fight merely for monetary gain. The satyagraha resolution contained no demand for monetary benefit. The demand was only for justice. Hence the satyagrahis have no ground for repudiating the resolution adopted by their representatives. I hope, therefore, that those who

have taken the wrong step of rejecting that resolution will realize their error and correct it.

A Teacher's Spinning

Shri Zaverbhai, a teacher at the Rashtriya Kumar Mandir of Varad writes:[1]

I congratulate Shri Zaverbhai on showing so much enthusiasm. Let other teachers follow his example. I feel like making one suggestion to Shri Zaverbhai. Three lakh yards of yarn weighing 18 seers means yarn of six counts. The cotton growing in Bardoli is usually good. Moreover, if the cotton is hand-picked and hand-carded, one can easily spin from it yarn of 20 counts. It may be true that more care is required in spinning yarn of 20 counts and, therefore, relatively more time will be needed to produce a given number of yards of such yarn. It does not matter if more time is required; there will be economy of cotton in spinning 20-count yarn. Moreover, we in Gujarat have to start spinning fine yarn. We can expect those who spin for love and with devotion to take the lead in producing such yarn. We can now find a number of men and women in Gujarat who are enthusiastic spinners like Zaverbhai. I suggest to them that they should spin fine yarn. If they wish to wear coarse khadi, they may certainly buy and wear such khadi and give away the fine yarn spun by them so that it may meet the needs of men and women who love to wear fine khadi. I believe the Khadi Association can easily arrange to give coarse khadi in return for fine yarn which can be woven into khadi. If this is done, the middle-class people who spin fine yarn and are content with coarse khadi will help much in the production of fine khadi in Gujarat itself.

An Old Woman's Testimonial

I give an extract from a letter[2] I have received from the khadi centre at Amreli:

Such remarks are made not by one old woman but by many. I have heard many old women say that the spinning-wheel pro-

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he himself had, in the course of four months, picked 7 maunds of cotton, carded it and made slivers from it; that he had spun 18 seers of yarn (measuring 3 lakh yards) and intended to give all his spare time to spinning in the current month.

[2] Not translated here. It stated that on the day of reporting there was a huge crowd to buy slivers at cheap prices. Among them was an old woman of 60 who was especially happy because she could now work and not be dependent on others.

vides them much-needed relief. Many widows have averred that it is their only support. It is the refuge of the down-trodden. There is a friend who, whenever he is angry, seeks out the spinning-wheel and its soothing movement brings peace to his soul. It is but natural that everyone may not have this experience. "As one's faith, so one's experience."

How Khadi May Spread

Nellore is a part of the Tamil-Telugu region. A correspondent from there writes to say:[1]

Even in parts where agriculture is a profitable occupation, people get enough spare time for spinning. They are able to do plenty of spinning from March to October, that is, for eight months, and earn at the rate of Rs. 5 a month. It is unfortunate that the women who spin wear foreign cloth, but, this will end only when the so-called cultured classes see dignity in wearing khadi, so that our ignorant country folk in the villages, who generally follow the example of city people, will also come to see dignity in cloth made out of hand-spun yarn. In fact, it is not in all regions that the women who spin behave in this way. In some villages which I visited, among the women who did spinning, I did not see any wearing cloth other than what was woven from yarn spun by themselves. What the correspondent has described happens in places where people have more money than they know what to do with.

Another thing worth noting is that where the women who spin take real interest in their work, they themselves attend carefully to the preparation of slivers. We can see from the correspondent's account that they engage a carder to work in their homes and get merely carding done by him; they watch the work and give directions so that the carding is done to their satisfaction. Afterwards, they find some time and themselves make the slivers. To have good slivers, it is certainly essential that the cotton should have been properly carded but it is also necessary that the rolling of slivers should be done with equal care. If in making a sliver the fibre is merely rolled into a cylindrical shape anyhow, even well-carded cotton will be wasted.

If cotton is spread out evenly on a hollow board and, with a thin stick placed over it, rolled with one's palm five or six times, the fibres get stretched out properly and form a roll to make a fine sliver. Only the person who spins with such a sliver knows the pleasure that spinning gives. If one or two more turns are

[1] The letter is not translated here.

given with the palm, the result will be still better. On the contrary, if only one or two turns are given, the sliver so made will not yield a well-twisted and even thread in spinning. In such slivers the fibres just stick together somehow and the thread, therefore, can never be even. The women in the region near the Nellore taluk probably know this and, therefore, do not entrust the rolling of slivers to the carders. If the carding is not well done, the defect is immediately noticed and can be remedied. On the other hand, if the slivers are made carelessly, it is not possible afterwards to improve their quality.

I hope that those who love spinning will keep in mind the points made here.

Kanchanlal Motilal Barfiwala

The person bearing this name is a resident of Surat. He is aged about 21 years. His parents do not know his whereabouts since *Ashadha Sud* 3, Samvat 1980[1]. He used to wear khadi and likes doing public service. He wears glasses. He was a *Navajivan* reader. His relatives do not know why he left home and where he has gone. If he happens to see this copy of *Navajivan*, I request him to get in touch immediately with his elders and relieve their anxiety. These days some young men seem to think it a great virtue to disappear without informing anyone. They do not, however, realize what suffering they cause to their relations. If any reader comes to know the whereabouts of this man, I request him to communicate the same to Kanchanlal's parents. Their address in Surat is Rani Talao.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-5-1925

12. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

FARIDPUR,
Sunday, Vaisakha Shukla 10 [May 3, 1925]

BHAISHRI BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I don't think the factory can be run with Rs. 5,000. No matter how much more capital is invested to run it, I think it is futile to hope for immediate returns. No person who offers any money should do so in the hope of any profit. No one who is not aware of all the facts about khadi and about the processing of yarn can, I think, be of any use. Whatever you do, please bear in mind all these factors. I suggest that on this matter we consult Bhai Vitthaldas Jerajani who runs the store in Bombay.

I too shall write to Mahomed Ali[1] to spare a Muslim [worker]. Collecting free cotton has come to be regarded as a means of making khadi cheaper. This experiment is being tried in Gujarat. I shall be in Bengal at least for this week. I have with me Mahadev[2] and Krishnadas[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My address in Bengal: 148 Russa Road, Calcutta.

From a photostat of the Hindi original: G.N. 2356

13. REPLY TO CIVIC ADDRESSES, FARIDPUR[4]

May 3, 1925

In course of his reply Mahatma Gandhi said that he was a lover of Municipal life. He esteemed it a great privilege whenever he was associated with anybody in Municipal service, which was really the foundation for a larger political life after which they were all hankering. But unless the foundation

[1] 1878-1931; Journalist and politician; led the Khilafat delegation to England in 1920; President, Indian National Congress, Cocanada, 1923

[2] Mahadev Desai (1892-1943); lawyer, journalist and author; Gandhiji's private secretary and biographer

[3] Author of *Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*

[4] Gandhiji and C. R. Das were presented with addresses at a meeting of the Municipal Corporation, Faridpur, held in front of the Town Hall. C. R. Das requested Gandhiji to reply on his behalf also.

was truly laid, there was no such thing as a larger life. Municipal life was the life of service. They had to look after the health of the citizens. They had to look after water supply which was a great thing in Bengal, especially in East Bengal.

As regards the eradication of malaria referred to in the address . . . he knew it required a remedy, but it was impossible for him, a frail imperfect human being, to prescribe a ready cure. He was not a medical man who had got so many drugs in his pocket, one of which he would offer as a remedy for all ills of life. He knew that the remedy lay through municipal service; it was really an impossible thing for them to commence at the top; they must begin at the bottom and that was what he was talking about, in season and out of season, about the spinning-wheel. It was reducing their towns to the simplicity of the village. And this message of the spinning-wheel was that they, the people of the city, who were drawing their sustenance from villages, should make some little return to the villages for the great thing they were doing for them. He hoped they would take care of spinning-wheel which, as he had said, was the foundation of their larger political life. He had not the slightest doubt that the larger life would take care of itself and that swaraj, which was the dream of his life, was not going to be attained unless they looked after these simple little things. He hoped the mofussil councillors would introduce spinning in municipal schools and start spinning companies. They could make khaddar dress compulsory.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-5-1925

14. SPEECH AT BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, FARIDPUR

May 3, 1925

PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

I am supposed to be speaking to you to return thanks for the very kind and generous words spoken about me by the Chairman of the Reception Committee and our worthy President. At the outset I want to tender my congratulations to the Subjects Committee on having finished its deliberations in perfect harmony. It is an open secret—and latterly we have ceased to have any secrets whatsoever in connection with our politics and, therefore, we have been welcoming, and even inviting, detectives so as to enable them to detect flaws in our policy, detect flaws in our doings and in everything that we may do in connection with the national policy and even outside the national policy. But still, as I said, it is an open secret that there were some disputes or

differences or dissensions in connection with the resolutions that will be brought before this House this afternoon. But all's well that ends well. I do not recall any Subjects Committee in which there have not been little differences or little jars. I suppose, they will abide with us to the end of time whether they are in India or elsewhere. European Cabinets have their secrets, but if we are permitted to pry into their secrets and into the secrets of their Subjects Committees, I suppose, we would have about the same kind of reports as reports are to be found in connection with our dissensions and disputes. Let us not, therefore, exaggerate those dissensions and differences, but let us treasure the thought that, after all, in the end we can unite and we can unite to a purpose. ("Hear, hear".)

I read the address of Deshbandhu Das and I have had the privilege and pleasure of reading the English translation. I do not know which is the original, whether Bengali or the English translation, because Bengali scholars tell me that the Bengali version reads as sweet and as eloquent as the English version, but, in any case, I had the pleasure and privilege of having an advanced copy of the English address when I was in Calcutta with a brief, little, loving, sweet note from Deshbandhu that, if I could spare a few minutes, I should read that address. Well, I read from the start to the finish and I was wondering whether he had pilfered every sentiment from me. (Laughter.) But I must confess to you that I saw that the language was not mine. The language was that of a scholar and not of a rustic who delights in calling himself a spinner, a scavenger, a weaver, a farmer and now even a *Namasudra*. (Laughter.) And so I saw that the language was not mine, but the thoughts seemed to have been pilfered and so immediately I said to myself, if he would ask me to subscribe to it, I would have no hesitation in doing so without perhaps altering a single word or a single phrase. But, perhaps, some of you will consider that this is no recommendation whatever for that address, but on the contrary that is the surest guarantee that the address is as dull as ditch water. Well, I assure you that it is not as dull as ditch water. And why do I want to give you that assurance? You have listened to it. You read it. And when a thing is not dull in reading, you may depend upon it.

I want to look not at phraseology. I do not want to look at the language. I only want to look at the thoughts that underlie it and what he has said to us in that address. If we are true to ourselves, if we are true to the nation, if we are true to the policy that was enunciated for the first time in Calcutta in 1920 with

all the great deliberation that we could bring to bear upon that policy, if we are to be true to that, then, there is absolutely nothing in that address to cavil at. And that address is a re-enunciation and an emphatic and unequivocal re-enunciation of the policy that was laid down for the first time in the history of the Congress in 1920. When I say laid down for the first time in the history of the Congress, it is not that the Congress ever believed in a policy of violence, nor that the Congress ever believed that we should follow anything but legitimate methods, but that the Congress never made that declaration. But in 1920 we chose deliberately to tell the world that we intended to attain that goal of swaraj, that in order to attain that goal we intended to follow a means that was absolutely peaceful and legitimate. And as I have translated these two phrases or these two words or paraphrases, "non-violent and truthful" means, do you abide by that interpretation or that paraphrase or these two words? And during the four or five years that have intervened, Deshbandhu has been one of those who have had a part in the shaping of the national policy in those terms—and you have no right to expect anything else from him and you have no right to expect anything more from him today. Anything more I say, because some of us like pepper and salt eschewed from our programme for the time being, at any rate. We have considered it, everyone of the leaders has considered it, that it is not possible for us to attain our freedom with pepper and salt or with fire and brimstone. We shall be able to attain our national regeneration —shall we say, national salvation—only by means that are absolutely non-violent and truthful; not that it need be the religion of any single one of us—it is sufficient if it is our policy, it is sufficient if we accept it from motives of expediency and no other or no higher motive.

We have problems in India to deal with which no other nation on the earth has. We have, if we are Hindus, to deal with our Muslim countrymen, with our Christian countrymen, with our Zoroastrian countrymen, with the Sikhs and so many sections and sub-sections of Hindus, which dignify themselves by a name which does not belong to Hinduism. How are we to achieve the unity of purpose, the unity of action between the diverse elements except by means which are not open to any question, namely, non-violence and truthfulness? We will not be able to deal with our Muslim countrymen or with our Hindu countrymen on any other terms. And then we have our provincialism. Bengal thinks that she must rule the whole of India

and that the whole of India is to be merged in that little province called Bengal (Laughter), and Gujarat probably thinks likewise. Gujarat, which is merely a drop in the ocean compared to Bengal, thinks it must rule the whole of India and India should be merged in Gujarat. Then take the brave Mahrattas with their recent traditions. Why should they not think that they must shape the destiny and policy of India? The Muslim with his still later traditions thinks that he must establish or re-establish a Muslim empire. From these diverse elements and provincialism there is no escape for us except through non-violent and truthful means because, otherwise, we are sitting on a mine which is likely to explode at any moment. The slightest trace of dirt in us is likely to make us perish and that is why I have insisted in season and out of season upon a policy not of religion but a policy of non-violence and truthfulness. You may do anything you like with your country after you have attained your goal.

You may resort to any means that you consider legitimate or proper for the vindication of your country's honour, but for me I make no secret. It is the first and the last. It is my religion. It is the breath of my nostrils—non-violence and truthfulness, and I wish, I could infect every young man in this hall with that zeal and with that devotion for this non-violence and truthfulness.

I know many a Bengali youth. I know that he has got courage which is matchless; I know he is eager to die for the freedom of his country as he is today living for the country. I claim, if it is not impertinence on my part, that I have also the ability to die for the country as I am today living for the country. But, as I have said, it is for me a living death. Death on the gallows has absolutely no terror for me. I believe I have got the capacity for dying on the gallows with a smile on my lips if I am innocent. If my hands and my heart are as white as snow, then death has no terror for me. Let it be so with every young man in Bengal. And Deshbandhu has re-enunciated and re-stated that policy for you. Did he not say the same thing in his beautiful address[1] at Gaya? I have not read that address even now, but I heard the echoes of that address delivered to me at the Yeravda Jail.[2] I did not pilfer that news. I may tell you I carried out every instruction of the Jailor's, but the Jailor and visitors sometimes told me what was passing outside the walls of that prison

[1] At the Congress session in 1922
[2] During 1922-24

and I came to know in ordinary course that Deshbandhu had enunciated in emphatic terms the policy of non-violence and the policy of truthfulness. He thinks likewise for you, for me, for himself and for the whole of the country. You know how he has been assailed. You know how many detractors he has, not merely amongst Europeans but amongst our own countrymen. He has detractors in his own camp. What is he to do? Is he to sit on the fence? Yes, he might have sat on the fence if he had not his country's interest in all his heart—if he did not dream about the deliverance of his country, and if he was not prepared to say in most loving manner: I cannot possibly wish you, Mahatma Gandhi, a long life because you are destined to die the moment we have achieved swaraj, because you are living for swaraj and swaraj alone and as I want my swaraj for India today, I cannot pray to God that Mahatma Gandhi may live long lest my swaraj be delayed. I treasure that thought and in that thought, although humorously uttered, is the highest compliment that he is capable of paying me or you are capable of paying me because it is right.

I am as impatient as any single one of you to attain swaraj. But I understand our functions, know what we have got to do. If we could get swaraj by a doze of intoxicating medicines, I would today hurl defiance at the great British throne and say out with you I want my swaraj today. But I cannot do that today. I cannot hurl that defiance. I admit my incapacity. I admit the incapacity of my country today. Yes, I can certainly take off a few Englishmen's heads as anyone can. It does not require strong arms. It requires a strong heart. A little bit of revolver can be manipulated by me just as [by] any one of you. But what is the use of my taking off the head of Lord Reading or Lord Lytton or of any Englishman? But I cannot possibly put that head on a charger and say that here is the deliverance of my country. Deliverance of the country requires a sterner stuff. We have got to evolve not merely the capacity for dying. We have got to evolve not merely the capacity for killing, but, as Dr. Besant[1] once said, it required some amount of courage, even to live in the face of odium, censure, neglect and boycott—even from those whom you have treasured as nearest and dearest to

[1] Annie Besant (1847-1933); British theosophist, orator and writer; founded the Theosophical Society in 1907; established the Indian Home Rule League in 1916; presided over the Indian National Congress in 1917; edited a daily, *New India*, and a weekly, *The Commonweal*; author of *The Religious Problem in India* and other books

you. And she was right. I say that every moment of my life it requires some degree of courage even to live in the midst of such storms and strife.

But how, then, are we to attain freedom of our country? Not certainly by killing, not certainly at the present moment even by dying, but by plodding, and that is the reason why I have humbly ventured to place before you these three things: Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and the spinning-wheel. But the Hindu-Muslim unity cannot occupy a young man's whole twenty-four hours. It is our creed. Just as a Mussalman has said his *kalma* it is finished and then he has got to live up to the implication of the *kalma*, just as I have recited a *gayatri*[1], it is finished with me and I need not be reciting it fifty million times during the day, but I must live up to it—so this is but a creed—of Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability. But every one of us can put our hands to something tangible, to something feasible. Everyone of us can put our hands to the beautiful spinning-wheel and with every yard of yarn that you spin, you spin every yard of the destiny of India. That is the finest revolution that I know for India. I know that some of you laugh—the laugh of incredulity. Some of you will consider —here is an idiot speaking to us in season and out of season about the spinning-wheel. But I promise, I prophesy that a day is to dawn, and is not very far, when nobody will call me an idiot. But the finest testimony that will be given to me will be that I revived the cult of charkha—that Gandhi gave the simple message of the rustic when he asked us to spin—that he spoke in terms of swaraj for the masses and millions of his down-trodden countrymen when he delivered the message of charkha. I have no misgiving about the future of my career. My career is ensured. My future is ensured so long as I swear by the charkha and I promise to you that [even if] everyone of the audience here, including Deshbandhu Das, says: "Gandhi is wrong; charkha is nothing, it is an idiotic thing in this age of machinery and speed", I will still say the same thing up to the very last breath of my life: "Give me the spinning-wheel and I will spin swaraj for India."

You will not get swaraj for India on any other terms. We must become a nation of workers and not a nation of talkers or idlers. We are by nature not idle but, by force of circumstances, millions of our countrymen have to live in enforced

[1] Vedic prayer to Sun-god

idleness. You do not know the idle masses as I do. I have lived in the midst of the 17 lakhs of people of Champaran for six months or more, and I have seen them hovering round me from day to day without doing anything whatsoever. They were satisfied to draw a little of warmth from one whom they considered to be their true servant, but they would not work. But I had not, at that time, this spinning-wheel or I would have placed it before them. They were not famishing, not starving, but they had forgotten the use of their limbs. They would scratch a little bit of earth, grow indigo, reap corn, but would not spin. They had no industry in their homes and, having forgotten it for years, they now consider it perfectly useless. That is why I call it enforced idleness. Our limbs were cut off by the East India Company—that is one of the blackest crimes that I have charged the British Rule with and that is why I have said that, not until I see a change of heart amongst the Englishmen, and not until they feel in terms of the masses of India and say: "Yes, we repent, we ought to return to India what we have taken from her"—for me there is no hand extended; to them I say, "I cannot clasp your hand if you do not call me, 'my dear brother'." I cannot do that unless he sympathizes with the masses of India. He flings a little bit of sympathy in the face of the masses from time to time. It is not enough for me. I want him to read the hearts of the masses and understand their economy, not economics borrowed from Europe, no matter how distinguished a personage he may be. He must think in terms of the masses and, the moment the Englishman begins to think in terms of the masses, you will find me fall prostrate at his feet, because I know his virtues, his capacities. But I cannot do so unless he develops along right lines. That being so, unless he does so, what is the use of my speaking to the Englishman; for I charge him with a black crime in that he has robbed me of the spinning-wheel.

But why should I charge him when you, my countrymen, refuse to spin for half an hour, when you send messages or when you write sometimes that 'this fool of a Gandhi has imposed this cursed franchise on us; let us get rid of it as he has imposed this cursed burden upon us.' But does he ask you to do something marvellous, something beyond your capacity when he asks, in the name of God, for the sake of the country, to spin if it is only for half an hour? Does he ask you to do something which you are incapable of doing when he asks you to be clad from top to toe in hand-spun and hand-woven cloth? What shall I say to you, what shall I do with you or how shall I attain my

swaraj if you cannot do this little practical thing? They accuse you, they accuse the Bengalis, of want of practicability and in some respects they are right. We want everything, but without having to work for it sufficiently. If we speak about the thing sufficiently, if we pass resolutions, but immediately, when it comes to actual work, we shirk it, remember those who shirk work for the sake of the nation shall have no hand in shaping the destiny of India, shall have no hand in attaining swaraj for India. I ask you, therefore, to retain this "Yarn Franchise". Make it still more restrictive. If it is to be restricted, make it obligatory on every man and woman who wants to serve India through the Congress, a living organization, make it obligatory upon every man and woman, upon every girl and boy, to spin for at least half an hour and to wear khaddar, not only on ceremonial occasions, not for Congress work, but for all work. In your home also, you will wear nothing but khaddar. You will go stark naked rather than that you should wear anything that is not hand-spun by your sister and hand-woven by your brother in your home and not in the factory. That is the message of the spinning-wheel. That is the simple little demand I make of every man and woman who loves India and who wants freedom of India.

Would you be surprised if I tell you that, if you want to have the discharge of those prisoners who are cooped within the walls of the Mandalay Prison, if you want the release of Subhash Chandra Bose[1] and others you must spin. Without work it is impossible. If you want him and his fellow-prisoners to be discharged with honour and with dignity, then I say, spin.

Promise me that every Bengali man and woman will henceforth wear khaddar and nothing but khaddar, that every man and woman will go to the charkha with the same delight that he goes to his meal or with the same delight of a young lover who goes to his sweetheart. Then I promise deliverance of those young men in no time.

You will find that this incredibly simple thing will secure their deliverance, because that will be a sign of your determination to work for India without expecting any remuneration; because I have asked only for half an hour's free labour for the sake of India. It is not a mighty thing that I ask of you. But [it is] because you are of little faith, because you have no faith in your

[1] 1897-1945; politician and nationalist; President, All-India Trade Union Congress, 1929-31; President, Indian National Congress, 1938, 1939; author of *The Indian Struggle*, founder of the Indian National Army

masses, because you have no faith in yourselves, because you have no faith in your country, that you decline to spin and still feel that Deshbandhu would secure the key of that prison, break their fetters and unlock those gates. It is impossible for him to do so.

Some of you consider that he is carrying on negotiations with the Government in secret. He has no secrecy whatsoever, so far as I know. Secrecy is prohibited in Congress politics. When somebody asked him what is at the back of all this, he said, "There is as much in the back of it as in the front". (Laughter.) Lord Birkenhead has sent no secret message to him. He is not in secret negotiations with him. All that he had got to say, you will find it in his beautiful address. You will find it in his writings and speeches. You will find it in his life when he is closeted in his own inner chamber or when he is in this big *pandal*. If you scratch him, I know you will find the same man wanting deliverance for the country. That is the link that binds me to him, that is the link that should bind the audience to him. That is the link which should bind you to him.

You may not be convinced with our reasons. You may say: "Our heart is satisfied that you are on the right track. We subscribe to your advice so long as we hold you to be our ideal." That is the way for you. That is the way I would like you to treat those whom you love. You [are] like sepoys and soldiers, it is not for you to reason why after you have chosen your leader. If you have not made your choice and are called upon to make your choice, exercise your reason to its utmost. Scan the would-be candidate to leadership from top to toe. But after having made your choice and after having garlanded, like Sita, your chosen person, never flinch and, like Sita, go throught the fire with him and all will be well with you. (Applause.)

The Searchlight, 8-5-1925

15. *REMINISCENCES OF BENGAL*

May 4, 1925

I am writing these reminiscences on Monday after returning from Faridpur. I write sitting on the covered terrace of the mansion formerly belonging to Deshbandhu Das. I have been in Bengal for four days but have still not recovered from the shock I felt when I first entered this mansion. I knew that the Deshbandhu had made over this building for public purposes. He had debts, I knew, but I also knew that he could clear them by practising for less than a year and keep the mansion. But he did not at all want to practise, or, rather, he wanted to plead the cause of his country without demanding fees. He decided, therefore, to give away this palatial building and made over its control to trustees. He wanted, however, that whenever I travelled I should stay while in Calcutta in that old building. And so I am lodged here.

But it is one thing to know a thing and quite another to see it with one's own eyes. My heart wept when I entered the house, and my eyes were moist with tears. In the absence of its former master, and no more his property, the mansion seemed to me like a jail. I felt miserable in it, and I have still not got out of that feeling.

I know that this is ignorant attachment. By giving up his ownership of the house, Deshbandhu has in fact lightened his burden. What use had the Dases for a building in which they would lose their way? If they want, they can turn a hut into a royal palace. For both of them it was a willing sacrifice. Why feel sad about it? Well, this is being philosophical. If I did not have this gift I would feel impelled to start building a palace for myself straightway.

Is it easy to escape the consequence of the *atman* dwelling in a physical body? Do others in the world act as Das did? People in the world would welcome a palace if they can have it, whereas this man gave away one. All honour to him! The tears in my eyes spring from love. The shock I felt was also the result of love. But is there no selfishness in this? If I had no bond at all with Deshbandhu, if I had not known him reigning like a king in this building, I would have felt no shock. I have seen many palaces whose owners departed from this world itself, leaving palaces behind them, but I shed no tears when entering them. These tears, therefore, spring from selfishness too.

Chittaranjan Das has lost nothing by giving away the palatial

bungalow. His services are the richer for this sacrifice.

The Bengalis are mad folk. If Das was mad, so is Prafulla Chandra Ray. He dances on the dais when addressing an audience. No one would believe that he is a learned man; he thumps his hands and stamps his feet. Whenever he likes he introduces English words and phrases in his Bengali. When speaking, he forgets himself. He is then totally absorbed in the flow of his thoughts and does not bother to know whether others laugh at him or what they think about him. We do not understand his greatness until we hear him speak, with our eyes fixed on his face. I remember that when I was staying with Gokhale[1] in Calcutta and Acharya Ray was his neighbour, the three of us went to the station one day. I had my third-class ticket with me, and they two had come to see me off. Anyone coming to see a third-class passenger off must be a beggar, people believe. But Gokhale's chubby face, his silken turban and silk-bordered dhoti were enough for the station master. But who would let this skeleton of a young bachelor, wearing a soiled long shirt and as lean as a beggar, go in without a ticket? So far as I remember, he cheerfully stayed out. Criticizing my obstinacy when he saw me literally squeezed in my seat in the compartment, Gokhale went away and rejoined his comrade. Why does Acharya Ray reign supreme over the hearts of innumerable students? Because he is also a man of self-sacrifice. And now he has gone khadi-crazy. He did not feel the slightest embarrassment in asking a Bengali woman officer of the Education Department: "What good can you do unless you wear khadi?" If he did not say this, would anyone buy khadi manufactured by his beggars of Khulna?

The same night we left for Faridpur. Shri Shankerlal[2] had given Satish Babu[3] a rather alarming account of my health. There was nothing, therefore, he would not do to make me comfortable. He, too, belonged to the mad folks' league. He had looked into the minutest of details. In order that I might rest my back while sitting, a wooden support was kept ready wherever I sat. I could accept it because it was a simple and inexpensive thing. But when

[1] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); scholar, patriot and statesman; was associated with the Indian National Congress since its inception and presided over its Banaras session in 1905; founded Servants of India Society at Pooona, member of Indian Public Services Commission, 1912-15

[2] Shankerlal Ghelabhai Banker, a Congress worker and labour leader of Gujarat; Gandhiji's associate for many years

[3] Satish Chandra Dasgupta, an associate of Acharya P. C. Ray, worked for Khadi Pratishtan; then Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

we reached the station, there was a first-class compartment for my companions and me. The Faridpur Reception Committee had also a hand in this arrangement. Only a few days ago a correspondent had asked me in a letter published in *Young India* whether I was a poor man or rich. It seemed as if Bengal had answered that question. I asked them if a second-class compartment was not good enough for my comfort, and why Bengal had arranged a first-class compartment for me. I was told in reply that they had paid for a second-class compartment and secured a first-class one. How could that reply satisfy me? According to my principle, we should not avail ourselves of a thing of which we do not approve even if it is offered gratis. If there should be anyone so foolish or mad as to offer me, free, a diamond necklace to wear, should I wear it? Are my companions, too, who serve me as secretaries and may even clean the lavatory, as weak as I so that for them also a first-class compartment should be provided at second-class fare? Moreover, this could not have been managed without the Railway people obliging. Should such personal favours be accepted? I saw in this arrangement the madness or excess of love.

I must find a solution to this problem. God's will be done. But, then, this madness is not confined to one class of people. We started for Faridpur at night and I had thought that I would get plenty of rest on the way and would be able to make up fully for the lost hours of sleep. But that was not to be. I had great difficulty in getting sleep, thanks to cries of "*alo*, *alo*" and other noises. The train also stopped at almost every station. At every station there were crowds and people insisted on having *darshan*. But I had resolved never to give *darshan* during night-time. So I kept lying down. But that did not help. My companions, too, tried hard to explain the position to the people, but the more they explained the more did the crowds get excited. There were louder and still louder shouts of "*Vandemataram*, *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*, *alo*, *alo*". *Alo* means light. The train lights had been switched off. The people wanted them to be switched on so that they could at least see me sleeping. This was the state of affairs at almost every station up to Faridpur. All the time I kept earnestly praying to God to save me from such love! When we arrived at Faridpur, there was a huge crowd, of course, but the arrangements on the whole were good. Babu Surendra Biswas, the chairman of the Reception Committee, had instructed the people in advance not to shout or rush towards me. The car, moreover, was kept right at the spot where I was to alight, so that we entered the city without harassment.

Exhibition

Before being taken to the place where I was to stay, I had to declare an exhibition open. They had accepted for it varieties of seeds and other such things supplied by the Government Agriculture Department, but the main sections related to khadi. Biswas Babu had decided not to permit the display of any specimen of cloth not manufactured from hand-spun yarn, wool or silk. This helped the khadi section very much; it became the centre of interest and the visitors had no chance to compare it with mill-cloth. There were, among the varieties of khadi, a great many specimens of fine cloth too. There was also a large quantity of fine yarn. There were even two persons sitting on a chair and spinning, neither of whom had to turn aside for winding the yarn. The yarn was being wound as it was spun. No doubt that type of the spinning-wheel did not produce more yarn at a faster rate, but there was one operation less to attend to and, as the wheel was being turned by foot, both hands remained free.

Looms had been received as exhibits from the Government factory at Serampur, and these also were accepted on condition that only hand-spun yarn must be used for both warp and woof. It was learnt on inquiry that students were now taught hand-spinning too in that factory. There were many *fataka* looms, too, on which they used only hand-spun yarn as warp. Even jute and wool were spun by hand in this section.

The processes relating to the tanning and dyeing of hides were also being demonstrated in the exhibition.

There were spinning competitions, and since many men and women had taken part in them the two sections were kept separate. Almost all of them drew fine yarn. All this created the impression on my mind that, if Bengal took up this work enthusiastically, it would come to occupy the first place in regard to khadi. I found very few people in Bengal who insisted on not wearing khadi. There is plenty of artistic sense, and much skill in spinning too. Many middle-class women spin fine yarn and with sincere devotion. The wife of the chairman of the Reception Committee, in whose house I was put up, has spun a large quantity for her family. She grows the *dev* variety of cotton on her small farm and spins it uncarded. This good lady made slivers for me with her own hands. They were very good indeed. She picks cotton from the plants as she needs it and arranges it properly to turn it into slivers. In a matter of minutes a whole heap of slivers is ready. A good many Swarajists in Bengal seem to

have taken up spinning. Biswas Babu himself is a Swarajist. The chairman of one of the [Congress] committees in Calcutta is also a Swarajist. He had sent to me at a public meeting yarn spun by him. We saw many men in Faridpur clad exclusively in khadi. There was a separate meeting for women. At this meeting, too, one saw a relatively larger number of women, larger than in similar meetings in Gujarat, dressed in khadi. I observed that the Bengali women did not have pleats in their saris, and, therefore, did not require any great length in their saris. But this is not the explanation of there being a large number of women in khadi at the meeting. We can only say that women in this part are more intelligent. It is true, of course, that a number of men and women had put on khadi specially for this occasion.

I have given here only the impression produced on me in Faridpur. As my present tour is connected solely with the khadi movement, I have still many more experiences in store for me. The reader will know afterwards what the sum total of these experiences comes to. As there is no entrance fee for the exhibition, thousands of people have taken advantage of it. On the next day, before I left Faridpur, prizes were awarded to persons who had demonstrated the different processes relating to khadi. The recipients of medals and prizes probably included equal numbers of men and of women. Among those who received medals three were Muslims. There were graded medals and prizes for the best carders, best sliver-makers, best spinners and best weavers.

At the Conference[1]

I found Deshbandhu's physical condition to be very bad. His voice has lost its strength. There is extreme weakness. In fact, he has not recovered well enough to be fit to undertake such exertions. Just now, the doctors have advised him to go to Darjeeling or some place in Europe to recuperate his strength. But he intends to do this only as a last resort.

A khadi marquee was specially erected for the Conference. It displayed the utmost simplicity. Seating arrangements were made on the ground. Not a chair was to be seen. The work of erecting the marquee was entrusted only to a tent-maker. He said he had made it exclusively of pure khadi, but all of us have serious doubts whether the cloth used was really khadi. I am trying to ascertain the truth. The important thing, however, is

[1] Bengal Provincial Agricultural Conference

that the organizers' intention was to have a khadi marquee and they believed that the one which was erected was of khadi.

Deshbandhu's speech was short and interesting. Every sentence breathed the spirit of non-violence. He stated clearly in his speech that India's salvation could come only through a non-violent struggle. If anyone asked me to put my signature to it, I would hardly find it necessary to alter a word or phrase.

It was but natural that the resolutions should be in tune with such a speech. There was, therefore, a good deal of heat in the Subjects Committee. Matters reached a stage when Deshbandhu felt it necessary to offer to resign, but ultimately his influence carried the day and the important resolutions of the Conference were passed without unpleasantness.

Anjuman Meeting

Muslim friends had arranged a separate meeting[1] to which we both were invited. Accordingly, Deshbandhu, his wife Vasantidevi and I went to it. There is some estrangement [between Hindus and Muslims] in Faridpur. I advised that the matter should be settled through arbitration and suggested that the Muslims should participate in the Conference. As a result, about a hundred of them attended on Sunday evening.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1925

16. SPEECH AT PRABARTAK ASHRAM, CHANDERNAGORE

May 5, 1925

The Mahatma said that he had long been entertaining the wish to come to the Ashram and he was glad that his wish was at last fulfilled. He had heard from Nirmal Babu a good deal about the inner life and history of the Sangha and expressed how profoundly he appreciated its high ideal and mission. He was told that the Sangha was founded on spiritual life. The members followed the inner knowledge and institution and lived the integral ideal of the ancient, *sanatan* dharma. Their principle was not merely a philosophy of *tyaga* or rejection, but total acceptance of life for the fulfilment of God's expression. That was the Vedic dharma and its foundation was *atma-darshan* or spiritual self-realization. It was not perfectly true to say that his own ideal of life was quite different—nay, largely political. Whatever he did, his

[1] On May 3, 1925

ideal was *paramartha* or "selflessness of the highest self" as he would say, and he was strictly a *mumukshu* or *moksharthi*, in the sense that he wanted his salvation through the service and salvation of the nation and humanity. Here he was really spiritual, for his motive was self-consecration and his whole life and work was dedicated entirely to the feet of Sri Krishna and Bharat Mata. Therefore, gently insisted the Mahatma that his ideal was nowhere essentially different from that of the "Prabartak Sangha". Next, he dwelt on the excellent system of spiritual education imparted at the Ashram and he was glad that their motto was *swavalamban* or practical self-help. Spirituality without economic foundation, as he believed, was a broken reed, and he congratulated the Sangha in having achieved such a unique harmony between spiritual life and economic *tapasya*.

Afterwards he dwelt on khadi and charkha and said he would be still more glad, when he would find that the Sangha had totally rejected mixed yarn. As now he would tell people wherever he went, to go to the Prabartak Ashram at Chandernagore, to see the excellent work there in respect of spiritual culture, exemplary character-building—so also he longed to say that the Sangha was doing pure khadi work alone as an ideal institution.

He explained further how his heart throbbed for the crores of India's sons and daughters who could not get even a mouthful meal every day and were plunged in abject misery. For these crores of India's poverty-ridden souls and for nationwide unity did he preach his triple gospel of khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability. It was for him his practical Vedanta, for he believed in the one self in all and would harm none for his life, which was the true meaning of his ideal of non-violence. He exhorted the audience to spin, weave and wear khaddar as the only means revealed to him, for securing swaraj for the millions of India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1925

17. SPEECH AT ASHTANGA AYURVEDA VIDYALAYA

CALCUTTA,
May 6, 1925

FRIENDS,

It was not without greatest hesitation that I accepted the invitation to lay the foundation-stone of this great institution. You know that some years ago I performed the opening ceremony of the Tibbia College[1] whose presiding deity was my esteemed friend and brother, Hakim Ajmal Khan[2]. Even then it was not without hesitation that I performed the ceremony. I could not resist the invitation that was given to me by a bosom friend and little could I resist a similar invitation coming again from a bosom friend. But I would be untrue to myself and untrue to those assembled if I did not express my deepest thoughts about medicine and particularly about Ayurvedic and Unani medicines and the profession in general. It was in 1908[3] that, for the first time, I reduced to writing my views about medicines and the medical profession, and I am not able, looking at it after so many years, to alter a single word of what I have said there. No doubt what I wrote in 1908 was compressed; it was a passing reference to a subject which was included among so many others which I had to deal within a mere booklet. Since then I have expanded the same thought, but I have not diminished the strength of the thought that I expressed in 1908. Every time I approach medical men and their medicines, I do so in fear and trembling, and it takes nothing away from my fear that I submitted to the living knife of a surgeon whom I only knew perfunctorily in the Yeravda jail.[4] I had the fullest confidence in Col. Maddock[5] as a man and as a friend but I had not the fullest confidence in his ways and in the medicines that he prescribed. If you

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 356-8.

[2] 1865-1927; eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

[3] Slip for 1909; for Gandhiji's observation on doctors and medicine in *Hind Swaraj* (1909); *vide* Vol. X.

[4] Gandhiji was operated upon for appendicitis in 1924; *vide* Vol. XXIII.

[5] Surgeon-General, Sassoon Hospital, Poona, who performed the operation

were to go to him today, he will issue a double certificate—one in my favour and the other against me. He will certify to you that to a certain extent I was a willing, obedient and a loyal patient, a more loyal patient he could not wish for. But he will also say and certify that I was one of the most difficult patients he had to deal with. He had to deal with my prohibitions. I will take this and I will not take that and my negations were far more than my ayes. And, therefore, he always came to me in despair whenever he felt that he wanted me to put a little more weight. It was with the greatest difficulty that he could persuade me to take so many of the medicines that he thought I should take and that I thought I ought not to take. (Laughter.) Well, there it is. I have merely given you a skeleton of my views about the profession, but perhaps you will better understand my views when I tell you that I belong to that noble, growing, but the still small school of thought which believes more in prevention than in cure, which believes in Nature doing things for herself even for suffering humanity if we would but let Nature take her course. I believe in that school of thought which considers that the less interference there is on the part of doctors, on the part of physicians and surgeons, the better it is for humanity and its morals. I belong to that school of thought among medical men who are fast coming to the conclusion that it is not their duty merely to subserve the needs of the body, but it is their bounden religious duty to consider the resident within that body, which is after all imperishable. And I belong to that school of thought among medical men who consider that they will do nothing in connection with that body if whatever they do is going to impair, in the slightest degree, the soul, the spirit within. And it grieves me so often when I find some of my best medical friends —and you will accept my word—but I assure you that it grieves me when they discuss with me the question whether there is such a thing as soul and when they tell me that, if there was a soul, it would not escape their deadly knife. Little do they know that the soul survives the knife and that the soul is not to be found by any probing of knife, however deep it may be. (Laughter). Therefore, it was with the greatest hesitation that I have approached this function.

I wonder whether it is a real sign of civilization when the number of hospitals in a particular place is larger than in another place. I wonder whether it is really a test of growth to find in the catalogues and in the directories of medical men that every year their sales are increasing by leaps and bounds and that the

inmates in the hospitals and dispensaries are increasing. I really wonder whether it is a sign of real progress. However, I know that there is the other side of it. I don't want to labour only on one side of this question. But, in all humility I have placed [these] for the consideration of those who are put in charge of the management of this great institution. I have hitherto confined my remarks to medicine and surgery in general, but when I come to the Ayurvedic and the Unani systems, I am filled with greater doubts. You may not know that, even from my boyhood, I have come in contact with many physicians, some of them known to be distinguished in their own localities. There was a time when I used to swear by the Ayurvedic medicine and used to commend it to all my friends, who went in for Western medicine, to go to these Ayurvedic physicians. But I feel sorry to have to own to you that I was undeceived and I found that our Ayurvedic and Unani physicians lack sanity. They lack the humility. Instead of that I found in them an arrogance that they knew everything (Laughter), that there was no disease which they could not cure. (Renewed laughter.) I found that they believed that the mere feeling of the pulse could enable them to understand whether the patient was suffering from appendicitis or some such other disease. When I found that their diagnosis was false, that it was incomplete in most cases, I felt that it was nothing short of humbug. When I turned to the advertisements of medicines—I shall not say from *Kavirajas*—but Unani Hakims and *Vaidyarajas*, I felt humiliated. I felt a sense of shame coming over me—these advertisements which pander to the basest passion of humanity, disfigure our newspapers and magazines. I have handled magazines devoted to the education of ladies. I have seen magazines devoted to the education and information of young men, and I have found these advertisements alluring, no doubt, profitable, no doubt, to those who advertise these nauseating things. I felt that they are cutting deep into the vitals of the suffering humanity.

Therefore, whilst I am going to perform this ceremony of laying the foundation stone of this noble institution and whilst I do so with a prayerful heart and wish it all success, I want the organizers to note my limitations, to understand the note of warning that I have uttered to those who are called upon to devote their wealth to this institution. I utter in all humility this note of warning. May this institution be of use to the real sufferers. May this institution take care not merely of the need of the body but of the imperishable soul that resides in that body. May it never be said of this institution that it panders to the basest taste of

humanity, that it panders to the basest taste of the youths of Bengal—and I know the youths of Bengal. I know how their fair life is being sapped by the medicines that are poured down their throats by physicians who, in the words of the Lord Justice Stephen, "introduce drugs of which they know little into the bodies of which they know less".[1] And so I plead, as I pleaded in Madras at a similar function, for sanity, for humility, for truthfulness, for fear of God among those who are the present organizers of the institution and those who follow. With these words I shall have much pleasure as soon as you give me room to go to the place where I have to lay the foundation and I shall have equal pleasure in praying for the success of this institution.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1925

18. COW-PROTECTION

Rightly or wrongly, most reluctantly and in fear and trembling I have shouldered the burden of conducting the All-India Cow-protection Organization that was brought into being at Madhavbag in Bombay on the 28th ultimo.

It is a tremendous task for which I am hardly fitted. I fancy that I know the disease. I know the remedy, but I have neither the time nor yet the men who can help me to carry out the ideas that are to govern this institution.

Cow-protection to me is not mere protection of the cow. It means protection of all that lives and is helpless and weak in the world. But for the moment cow-protection means primarily protection of the cow and her progeny from cruelty and slaughter and derivatively all other cattle, e.g., the buffalo.

India is the one country in the world where cow-protection is a religious obligation for over twenty crores of her people. And yet the cattle of India are miserable-looking, ill-treated, underfed, over-burdened, deteriorating and are even said to be a burden on the land. Nowhere else on the earth are milch cattle led to the slaughter house because they go dry long before they should. Nowhere else perhaps do cattle give less milk than they cost to feed and keep.

How can this state of things be remedied? Certainly not by multiplying cow-protection societies which do not know their business; most certainly not by fighting the Mussalmans about things

[1] *Vide* also Vol. XI, p. 435.

which they cannot help even if they would. I do not here take note of those Mussalmans who, merely to wound Hindu susceptibility, kill cows deliberately and preferably and, as it were, in the Hindus' faces. These are exceptional cases. I am thinking of the cattle economics. If we take care of them, the rest will take care of itself. If the cattle are an economic burden and if one cannot set the condition right, nothing can prevent them from perishing or being slaughtered. The problem, therefore, is to study the question calmly and without sentiment. Religion without the backing of reason and enlightenment is a worthless sentiment which is bound to die of inanition. It is knowledge that ultimately gives salvation. Devotion to the cow divorced from knowledge is the surest way of imposing premature death on her. Therefore, one man with an accurate knowledge of the cattle problem, if he has the heart for the cow, represents in his own person all the cow-protection societies that were and will be ever formed. This all-India organization is conceived with that end in view, to find out men, chaste, pure, lovers of the cow and learned who would give their whole time to the work of investigation and administration. I want, therefore, a secretary whose qualifications I have described in the opening speech reported elsewhere in these pages. A treasurer too has still to be found. Meanwhile, a provisional committee and a provisional treasurer and a provisional secretary have been appointed in order to do the preliminary work. The committee is by no means representative of all India. For it was necessary to appoint one from those present. The members of this provisional committee have undertaken, during the three months that are to elapse before it meets again, to enlist over twelve hundred members. If the organization is to be representative, it should have members from all the provinces. The provisional secretary is Sjt. Nagindas Amulakhrai of Bombay, (30, Hanuman Building, Homji Street, Circus Road) and the provisional treasurer is Sjt. Rewashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri[1] of Jhaveri Bazar, Bombay. I hope that those who are interested in cow-protection will send in their subscriptions to the secretary or the treasurer. The subscription is Rs. 5 per year payable in advance or two thousand yards of hand-spun yarn per month.

Young India, 7-5-1925

[1] A friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

19. *AT IT AGAIN*

My revolutionary friend has returned to the charge, but I must tell him that he has not been as patient with his composition as before. He has introduced in his letter under discussion much irrelevant matter and has argued loosely. So far as I can see, he has exhausted all his argument and has nothing new to say. But should he write again, I advise him to write his letter more carefully and boil down his thoughts. I have been obliged to do that for him this time. But as he is seeking light, let him read carefully what I write, then think out his thoughts calmly and then write out clearly and briefly. If it is merely questions he has to ask, let him simply write them out without arguing to convince me. I do not pretend to know everything about the revolutionary movement, but as I have been obliged to think, observe and write a great deal, there is very little new that he can tell me. Whilst, therefore, I promise to keep an open mind, I ask him, please, to spare a busy servant of the nation and a true friend of the revolutionary the labour of reading much that he need not read. I am anxious to keep in touch with the revolutionary and I can only do so through these columns. I have a soft corner for him in my heart, for there is one thing in common between him and me—the ability to suffer. But as I humbly believe him to be mistaken and misguided, I desire to wean him from his error or in the process myself be weaned from mine.

My revolutionary friend's first question is:

> "The revolutionaries have retarded the progress of the country." Do you differ with your own view, when you wrote in connection with the Bengal Partition: "After the Partition people saw that petitions must be backed up by force, and that they must be capable of suffering. This spirit must be considered to be the chief result of the Partition. . . . That which the people said tremblingly and in secret began to be said and written openly. . . . People, young and old, used to run away at the sight of an English face; it no longer awed them. They did not fear even a row, or being imprisoned. Some of the 'best sons of India' are at present in banishment."[1] The movement which followed the Partition or more correctly which was the manifestation of the unrest of the people was the revolutionary movement, and the best sons of India you speak

[1] *Vide* Vol. X. pp. 12-3.

of are mostly revolutionaries or semi-revolutionaries. How is it that these so-called ignorant and misguided persons were able to reduce, if not remove, the cowardice of India? Would you be so intolerant as to call the revolutionaries ignorant, because they cannot understand your peculiar dogma of non-violence?

There is no difference between the view expressed in *Indian Home Rule*[1] from which the writer has quoted and the views now expressed by me. Those who led the Partition movement, whatever and whoever they were, undoubtedly shed the fear of Englishmen. That was a distinct service to the country. But bravery and self-sacrifice need not kill. Let my friend remember that *Indian Home Rule*, as the booklet itself states, was written in answer to the revolutionary's arguments and methods. It was an attempt to offer the revolutionary something infinitely superior to what he had, retaining the whole of the spirit of self-sacrifice and bravery that was to be found in the revolutionary. I do not call the revolutionary ignorant merely because he does not understand or appreciate my method, but because he does not even appear to me to understand the art of warfare. Every one of the warriors whom my friend quotes knew his art and had his men.

The second question is:

> Was Terence MacSwiney a "spotless lamb" when he died of hunger-strike of 71 days? Please remember that he was to the last an advocate of conspiracy, bloodshed and terrorism, and maintained his ideas expressed in his famous book *Principles of Freedom*. If you can call MacSwiney a "spotless lamb", will you not be ready to use the same term for Gopimohan Shaha[2]?

I am sorry to say I do not know enough of the life of MacSwiney to be able to give an opinion. But if he advocated "conspiracy, bloodshed and terrorism", his method was open to the same objections that have been advanced in these pages. I never regarded him as a "spotless lamb". I gave my humble opinion when his fast was declared, that from my standpoint it was an error. I do not justify every fast.

The third question is:

> You believe in *varnas*. Therefore, it is self-evident that you hold the Kshatriyas to be of the same utility as any other *varna*. The revolutionaries profess to be Kshatriyas in this *Nikshatriya* epoch in India. *Kshatat trayate iti Kshatriyah*. I consider this state of India to be the greatest *Kshata* which India has ever met with, in other words this is the time

[1] *Vide* Vol. X, pp. 6-68.

[2] Slip for Gopi Nath Saha; *vide* Vol. XXIV, pp. 200-2.

when the need of Kshatriyas in India is the uttermost. Manu, the Prince of Hindu lawgivers prescribes four ways for the Kshatriya: "*sama, dana, danda, bheda*". In this connection I reproduce a passage from Vivekananda, which I think will greatly help you to comprehend the matter full well.

"All great teachers have taught 'Resist not evil', have taught that the non-resisting is the highest moral ideal. We all know that if, in the present state of world, people try to carry out this doctrine, the whole social fabric would fall to pieces, society would be destroyed, the violent and the wicked will take possession of our property, and possibly take our lives also. Even one day of such non-resistance would lead to the utter dissolution of the country." I know what you will do in this awkward position, you will try to interpret it differently, but you shall find that he has left no room for such misinterpretation, because he instantly adds, "Some of you have read perhaps the *Bhagavad Gita* and many of you in Western countries may have felt astonished at the first chapter wherein our Shri Krishna calls Arjuna a hypocrite and coward, on account of his refusal to fight or offer resistance, because his adversaries were his friends and relatives—his refusal on the plea that non-resistance was the highest ideal of love. There is a great lesson for us all to learn, that in all things the two extremes are alike; the extreme positive and the extreme negative are always similar; when the vibrations of light are too slow we do not see them nor do we see them when they are too rapid; so also with sound, when very low in pitch we do not hear it, when very high we do not hear it either. Of like nature is the difference between resistance and non-resistance . . . We must first care to understand whether we have the power of resistance or not. Then having the power, if we renounce it and do not resist, we are doing a grand act of love; but if we cannot resist and yet at the same time make it appear and ourselves believe that we are actuated by motives of highest love, we shall be doing the exact opposite of what is morally good. Arjuna became coward at the sight of the mighty array against him, his 'love' made him forget his duty towards his country and King. That is why Shri Krishna told him that he was a hypocrite: 'Thou talkest like a wise man, but thy actions betray thee to be a coward, therefore stand up and fight." I want to add nothing more except a few questions. Do you think that your so-called heart-and-soul non-violent disciples can resist this alien bureaucrat government by physical force? If yes, on what ground; if not, how then does your non-violence remain the weapon of the strong? Please answer these questions in the most unmistakable terms, so that no one can make different interpretations.

Along with it I shall ask you the following questions, which directly arise from your statement. In your swaraj, is there any place for soldiers? Will your swaraj government keep armies? If so, will they

fight—I mean use physical force, when necessary, or will they offer satyagraha against their opponents?

I have room in my philosophy of life for Kshatriyas. But my definition of him I take from the *Gita.* He who does not run away from battle, i.e., danger, is a Kshatriya. As the world progresses, the same terms acquire new values. Manu and the other law-givers did not lay down eternal principles of conduct. They enunciated certain eternal maxims of life and laid down for their age rules of conduct more or less in accord with those maxims. I am unable to subscribe to the methods of bribery and deceit even for gaining entrance into heaven, much less for gaining India's freedom. For heaven will not be heaven and freedom will not be freedom if either is gained through such methods.

I have not verified the quotation said to be from Vivekananda. It has neither the freshness nor the brevity that mark most of that great man's writings. But whether it is from his writings or not, it does not satisfy me. If a large number of people carry out the doctrine of non-resistance, the present state of the world will not be what it is. Those individuals who have carried it out have not lost anything. They have not been butchered by the violent and the wicked. On the contrary, the latter have shed both their violence and wickedness in the presence of the non-violent and the good.

I have already stated my meaning of the *Gita.* It deals with the eternal duel between good and evil. And who does not, like Arjuna, often quail when the dividing line between good and evil is thin and when the right choice is so difficult?

I heartily endorse, however, the statement that he alone is truly non-violent who remains non-violent even though he has the ability to strike. I do, therefore, claim that my disciple (I have only one and that is myself) is quite capable of striking, very indifferently and perhaps ineffectively, I admit; but he has no desire to do so. I have had in my life many an opportunity of shooting my opponents and earning the crown of martyrdom, but I had not the heart to shoot any of them. For I did not want them to shoot me, however much they disliked my methods. I wanted them to convince me of my error as I was trying to convince them of theirs. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."

Alas! In my swaraj of today there is room for soldiers. Let the revolutionary friend know that I have described the disarmament and consequent emasculation of a whole people as the blackest crime of the British. I have not the capacity for preach-

ing universal non-violence to the country. I preach, therefore, non-violence restricted strictly to the purpose of winning our freedom and, therefore, perhaps for preaching the regulation of international relations by non-violent means. But my incapacity must not be mistaken for that of the doctrine of non-violence. I see it with my intellect in all its effulgence. My heart grasps it. But I have not yet the attainments for preaching universal non-violence with effect. I am not advanced enough for the great task. I have yet anger within me, I have yet the *dwaita bhava*—duality in me. I can regulate my passions. I keep them under subjection, but before I can preach universal non-violence with effect, I must be wholly free from passions. I must be wholly incapable of sin. Let the revolutionary pray with and for me that I may soon become that. But, meanwhile, let him take with me the one step to it which I see as clearly as day-light, i.e., to win India's freedom with strictly non-violent means. And, then, under swaraj, you and I shall have a disciplined, intelligent, educated police force that would keep order within and fight raiders from without if, by that time, I or someone else does not show a better way of dealing with either.

Young India, 7-5-1925

20. NOTES

Deification of Me

A Muslim friend met me at Dungargarh station and told me that the process of deifying me, especially among the Gonds, was going on as merrily as ever. I have expressed my horror and strongest disapproval of this type of idolatry more than once. I claim to be a mere mortal, heir to all the weaknesses that human flesh betrays. It would be infinitely better that the Gonds should be taught to understand the meaning of my simple message than that they should indulge in a meaningless deification of me which can do no good either to them or to me and can intensify the superstitious nature of such simple people as the Gonds. I bespeak the help of every Congressman in the necessary work of undeceiving the Gonds of their error.

The Untouchables

At one of the stations on the way to Calcutta, I found to my great joy a number of untouchables. They presented me with a piece of khaddar spun and woven by them. The workers told me

that the most substantial work was really done by the untouchables. They were giving up drink and carrion and taking to khaddar. Had I not been told that the people I met at this station, Jharsingada, were untouchables, I should not have distinguished them from the rest of the company.

Khaddar

At Raigarh I was astounded to hear that there was not a single spinning-wheel. The men who had come to meet me quietly told me that some of them wore what the poor people from the interior brought. They informed me that khaddar has become very popular among the people in the villages and that, if there was more interest taken in the work, it could easily become universal. The people of the Central Provinces including Chhatisgarh are specially adapted for the wheel and the loom which merely await organization.

Splitting Hairs

A well-known Congressman for whom I have great regard and who prides himself of being a disciplinarian was found the other day not being wholly dressed in khaddar. I thought that he was fully dressed in khaddar. But the friends who lived in the same town with him knew better and asked me to persuade this friend to respect the Congress resolution. The friend frankly admitted that all the articles of his clothing were not made of khaddar, but said that, in having come to me, he was not on Congress work. This was a hair-splitter for which I was wholly unprepared, especially from a disciplinarian. I enjoyed no private relations with him. He came to discuss with me public affairs and, therefore, I thought that, in coming to see me, he had come on Congress or public work. But the friend held otherwise and said that he came to see me not on Congress business. I told him such hair-splitting distinctions delayed the advent of swaraj. The Congress resolution, in my opinion, provides for exceptional circumstances in which khaddar dress may be dispensed with without the wearer forfeiting his membership. It does not absolve members from the natural obligation to wear khaddar on all occasions. If men at the top resort to fine distinctions for not wearing khaddar, it is impossible for the common folk to conform to the khaddar dress unless it becomes cheaper and more easily available than foreign calico. They expect the leaders to go the whole length in order to enable them to go a quarter.

Young India, 7-5-1925

21. BENGAL NOTES

[*May 7, 1925*]

'1ST-CLASS SCANDAL'

Gujarat thinks that it can take more care of my body than the other provinces. Bengal evidently thinks otherwise. "I must travel in first-class through saloons," says Bengal. Satish Babu whom I questioned regarding the "scandal" of putting me in a first-class saloon said it was the Faridpur Reception Committee that was responsible for it. His other excuse was that a through saloon was taken to avoid a night change, that a through bogie necessarily contained a first-class compartment and that the railway authorities had generously charged 2nd-class fares for 1st-class seats. Let the reader understand that the bogie meant payment of at least ten 2nd-class fares. All this, it was suggested, was necessary in the interest of my health which, whilst I was in Bengal, must not on any account be put in jeopardy by any act of omission or commission on the part of the organizers.

My own opinion is that my tour cannot do much good if I must be thus wrapped in cottonwool. I must either live or travel as like the millions of poor people as possible or cease to travel at all in the public interest. I am quite certain that I can no more effectively deliver my message to the millions by travelling not even double first but fivefold first than the Viceroy can rule over the *hearts* of India's millions from his unapproachable Simla heights. Single 2nd class is about as much as it is possible to tolerate. Finding me in a luxuriously fitted 1st-class compartment, the poor cannot regard me as one of themselves. They, therefore, peeped into it with awe every time they came near it. I also felt queer looking at them. My body may have found more comfort, but my soul was ill at ease. I am convinced that we cannot enter the hearts of the poor unless we would suffer with them. I have always known that my usefulness for the service of the poor was half curtailed when I was disabled, or thought I was disabled, for travelling 3rd class. Had I never travelled 3rd class, I would never have felt like the poor and one of them. I look upon my 3rd-class travelling as the most precious among my experiences. I, therefore, feel that ordinary 2nd class is about the limit beyond which I must not go, beyond which friends must not take me or tempt me, if they would have me to serve the country by

touring. When I become unfit for even 2nd-class travelling, I must cease to serve by touring. God does not give direct notices. He sends us signs which those who will may read. I am not much disturbing the present arrangements made by the Reception Committee, but I hereby give notice to my friends that they may not smother me with excessive affection. They may take all precautions that may not be inconsistent with a due sense of proportion. But let them leave something to God. No precaution will be enough if God wished me not to tour and no want of it will lay me prostrate so long as it is His will that I should serve through touring. Let me also assure them that I am too careful of my body to neglect those bodily wants which I regard as necessary. Let me also record with gratitude the fact that no province, not even Gujarat, has showered on me greater affection than Bengal. It has been my precious privilege never to feel a stranger in any of the provinces, least of all in Bengal.

A Fit Nemesis

But though the Reception Committee had taken excessive precautions for my comfort, gods had willed otherwise. For the whole night's rest, during the journey to Faridpur, was disturbed by crowds at almost every station howling for *darshan.* My companions tried in vain to pacify these blind admirers. They vainly pleaded for rest for my fatigued body. "*Alo, alo,*" light, light, "*—ki jai*", rent the air and exasperated the sleeping passengers. The crowd felt no consideration even for them. I remained obdurate. I would not rise from my bed though I risked the loss of my Mahatmaship. I regarded it as a crime to pander to such wild and meaningless affection. There can be no doubt about it that we need iron discipline. Our affection for individuals or for the country should be enlightened. So long as it is not brought under control, it must run to waste and, at times, even cause injury by unintended explosions. Every village must have silent, self-effacing and intelligent workers who would lead people to transmute their affection into real power for the country. "Handsome is that handsome does." True affection will show itself not in midnight shouts but in quiet national work. All the people of intermediate stations cannot see me or their other idols. But all can use the occasion of their visits for shaking off lethargy and doing more work.

Mad Bengalis

Bengalis are mad. Deshbandhu Das gives up his palatial house to the trustees for national purposes. I know that the house carries with it certain liabilities. But the Deshbandhu could have,

if he had chosen, wiped them out inside of a year by returning to his princely practice. I could not enter the vast mansion without feeling sad and shedding a tear. As a philosopher I know that, in getting rid of the house, he has got rid of a burden. But, as a man living in the world, I know that millions would be glad to shoulder such burdens and feel happy in uncomfortably big mansions. I therefore could not restrain myself as I entered the house and was lodged in the very room which was but yesterday occupied by the distinguished servant of India. But that is not the limit of his madness. He is ailing, he is weak. He squats with difficulty. He rises from his seat with difficulty. His voice has lost its original strength. But he must preside—not for applause, but for service. He must sit up late at the Subjects Committee. He must reason with those who will not or cannot see the necessity of the lucid explanation of his position.

Nor is he the only mad Bengali. There is the great Acharya Ray. In perfect self-forgetfulness he dances on the platform, now thumping this leg and now that. Quite unnecessarily he would break out into English before a pure Bengali audience. He does not care what others will think of him. He is lost in his theme. And who that does not know him will ever consider him to be one of the greatest among the scientists of the world? He still loves his science college. He gives it his very soul. But he is khaddar mad. He divides his love between science and khaddar. Or perhaps, he regards khaddar as a true product of scientific research. Be that as it may, it requires a mad man to ply the charkha when he might be handling exquisitely delicate instruments in order to wrest from Nature some of her precious secrets. I could, perhaps, indefinitely multiply the names of such mad Bengalis. But the reader must be satisfied with these two brilliant samples.

Nothing behind It

But I must return to the Deshbandhu. So many people have asked me, "What is at the back of his manifesto?" I put to him the question on behalf of the inquirers. His answer was emphatic and characteristic.

> There is no more at the back of it than there is in the front of it. My manifesto and my address are in reply to the challenge of European friends. I have repeatedly told them that I abhor violence. I believe that India's freedom can only be attained by non-violence. They then asked me to say the same thing in public in emphatic and unequivocal language. I had no objection and no hesitation. This is the whole his-

tory of the manifesto and my address. In them I have condemned both—the violence of the revolutionary and the repression of the Government, which is but another name for violence. I have also stated the terms on which as a self-respecting man, I can co-operate. Let any reasonable man examine them dispassionately and, if he discovers a flaw in them or in the statement of my position, let him point it out to me. It now rests with the Europeans and the Government to take the next step.

This is as I have understood to be the Deshbandhu's position. I have not been able to reproduce his language. I have endeavoured to reproduce his thought. The address is remarkably brief, lucid and temperate. There is a studied attempt not to wound anybody's susceptibilities. His condemnation of violence is beyond cavil. If I were asked to subscribe to it, I should do so without perhaps altering a single word or phrase. In my opinion, he has built a golden bridge over the gulf that divides the British from us. It is for them to use it if they will.

The Resolutions

The resolutions are in the main a summary of the address. Exception has been taken to their utility inasmuch as there were differences of opinion in the Subjects Committee about some of them. So there were. But, in my opinion, they acquire added importance from that fact. They have been passed after full discussion and deliberation. Expression of differences of opinion is a healthy sign of growth, by no means that of weakness of capacity for execution.

Possibilities of Khaddar

I was unprepared for the discovery I seem to have made of the spread of khaddar in Bengal. The Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition held at Faridpur was more a khaddar exhibition than anything else. Khaddar was not assigned a mere corner in the exhibition. It overshadowed all other exhibits. There were many weavers, some weaving artistic designs, but all were working with hand-spun—either cotton or silk. The Government industrial institution at Serampore had also sent their demonstrators. They showed jute-spinning by the hand and other processes that jute goes through. As jute is one of the greatest industries of Bengal, spinning jute by the hand may give honourable cottage industry to many a home. At the present moment, jute goes to the mills directly from the field under conditions said to be in no way

favourable to the jute growers. The average cotton-spinning of Bengal is probably superior to [that of] Andhra. The spinning competition held on the exhibition grounds showed a degree of skill among voluntary spinners not to be met with perhaps elsewhere. Specimens of khaddar too would compare favourably with the best Andhra make. In fineness of counts Bengal, if it is a little better organized, is likely to beat Andhra in a year's time. No other province can perhaps compete with Bengal in this respect.

On a par with the competition at the Faridpur exhibition was a competition arranged by the Khadi Pratishthan at Mirzapur Park. Rai Yatindra Nath Chaudhari of Nakipur and Mrs. Kamini Roy, the distinguished poetess, took part in it. Babu Shyam Sunder Chakravarti and Satish Babu, the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee, were also in it and last but not the least, Dr. Ray himself took part in it. He already draws an even good thread not less than 12 counts. He tells me the charkha is growing on him and he takes delight in his spinning. Nearly 180 spinners took part in the competition. I do not think it is possible in any other part of India to get together so many men and women of the upper middle class taking part in such an exhibition and spinning with such great skill. Let me note, too, that many Swarajists are themselves spinning regularly and with zest. My hostess in Faridpur is the wife of a staunch Swarajist, Babu Suresh Biswas. She is a fine spinner. She and her children are devoted to the wheel. She gives all her spare time to the wheel. I am told that, during my tour which really commences today (I am writing these notes on 7th May at Calcutta), I shall see still better exhibition of khaddar work of Bengal. There is no doubt that, if Bengal wills, it can lead the country in khaddar as she can in several other things. She has talent, she has a fine imagination, she has poetry, she has great self-sacrifice to her credit, she has the necessary skill, she has material. Will she add to all these qualities the will to do it? May God grant it.

The Sage of Barrackpore

I was privileged to visit Sir Surendranath Banerjea[1] at his residence at Barrackpore. I had heard that he was ailing and that age had told upon his steel frame. I was anxious, therefore, to pay my respects to him. Though he might not approve of some of my activities, my regard for him as a maker of modern Bengal and

[1] 1848-1925; President, Indian National Congress in 1895 and 1902; later, one of the leaders of the Moderate party; author of *A Nation in Making*

a Nestor of Indian politics has not suffered any diminution. I remember the time when educated India hung on his lips. It was, therefore, with great joy that I approached the pilgrimage to Barrackpore. Sir Surendra has a magnificent mansion situated on the river bank among beautiful surroundings. All around there is great quiet. One can understand what a great relief it must have been to him to be able, every day, to retire to this pleasant retreat after the daily toil in crowded Calcutta. I expected to see him lying in bed weak and care-worn. Instead, I found myself in the presence of a man standing erect from his seat to greet me affectionately and talking to me with the buoyancy of youth. He told me in the course of our conversation that his memory was still as green as ever. He could paint, he told me, the scenes of his childhood. The reminiscences that have just been published he wrote during the past nine years. He showed me with justifiable pride the whole of his beautiful manuscript. It is all written methodically in clear, bold hand with a steady pen. Sir Surendra Nath is now 77 years old, but he has, like Pandit Malaviyaji[1], faith in himself. He said, "I have given myself ninety-one years. And I hope to be able to retain my present energy till then." When I inquired what he was reading, he told me he was revising his reminiscences as he expected to publish a second edition inside of a year. He takes a lively interest in everything that passes around him. He has taken from me a promise to meet him again before I leave Bengal. "I must come to you if you cannot find the time to run up to Barrackpore," he said. "I will not think of putting you to that trouble. I will make time to come again without fail," I replied. Sir Surendra Nath owes his vitality to his unfailingly regular habits. Nothing could keep him overnight in Calcutta. It might almost be said that he never missed his last train for Barrackpore. This regularity, he would say, was as necessary for the service of India as strenuous work itself.

A Contrast

The poor, thank God, are always with me. They sought me out at the great man's mansion. Among them was a humble Bihari clerk who wanted me to go to his quarters where he had six charkhas going and where he was selling khaddar to poor men. The request was irresistible. We went to his humble quarters which were situated in the coolie-barracks connected

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); elected four times President of the Congress; founder of Benares Hindu University; author and parliamentarian; member, Round Table Conference and Imperial Legislative Council

with the waterworks. He showed me the wheels that he and his friends were working and the nicely arranged stock of khaddar, all of which he received from Bihar. "Why don't you get the locally manufactured khaddar?" I asked. "Because," he answered, "I am helping to sell the surplus stock from Bihar." He told me that he made no profits. For running this humble store the coolies give him, to defray the out of pocket expenses, one pice per rupee of their wages. He sells nearly Rs. 2,500 worth of pure khaddar among the coolies who come from Bihar and the contiguous districts of U.P. We have no notion of the penetrating capacity of the wheel and khaddar. Wherever I go, I find these unknown, self-appointed, honest young men taking their humble share in this glorious work which is bound to succeed and solve the problem of the grinding pauperism of the masses by providing them with the labour they can do with ease and comfort.

Young India, 14-5-1925

22. *LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE*

CALCUTTA,
May 7, 1925

DEAR GURUDEV[1],

Suneeti Devi tells me she is going to Bolpur to take part in the celebration of your 64th birthday. May I add my wish and prayer to the many that will be sent up tomorrow for your health and long life?

Andrews told me in one of his letters that you were not keeping well. I hope that you are now feeling stronger.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: G.N. 4628

[1] 1861-1941; poet and author; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1913; founder of a school at Santiniketan later known as Visva Bharati.

23. *SPEECH AT BUDDHA BIRTH ANNIVERSARY*[1]

CALCUTTA,
May 7, 1925

FRIENDS,

It is now my pleasant duty to perform this service. I shall not say anything of these proceedings. Dr. Dharmapala has added a pathetic touch to this service.[2] And he has laid on my shoulders a burden which I consider I am ill-fitted to carry. I hesitated last year when Mr. Natarajan drew me out of my convalescent bed and asked me to preside at the anniversary last year,[3] but I could not resist Mr. Natarajan, for I have very great and deep affection for him. I know that from that time I would be perhaps called upon to take part at such functions somewhere in India from year to year. And so it happened even when I came to Calcutta. It is a very strange thing that almost all the professors of great religions of the world claim me as their own. The Jains mistake me for a Jain. Scores of Buddhist friends have taken me for a Buddhist. Hundreds of Christian friends still consider that I am a Christian and some Christian friends do not even hesitate to ascribe, by implication, cowardice to me and say: "We know, you are a Christian, but you are afraid to own it. Why don't you come forward boldly and say you believe in Jesus and his salvation?" Many of my Mussalman friends consider that, although I do not call myself a Mussalman, to all intents and purposes, I am one of them; and some Mussalman friends consider that I am on the road to it, very near, but still far short of it. All this is extremely flattering to me and I take it as a mark of their affection and their esteem. For me, however, I regard myself as one of the humblest of Hindus, but the deeper I study Hinduism the stronger becomes the belief in me that Hinduism is as broad as the Universe and it takes in its fold all that is good in this world. And so I find that with Mussalmans I can appreciate the beauties of Islam and sing its praises. And so simul-

[1] Gandhiji presided over the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha celebrated at the Buddha Vihara, under the auspices of the Mahabodhi Society.

[2] The General Secretary of the Society had spoken earlier on the teachings of the Buddha and the way he had himself been carrying on the work of the Buddha in Bengal.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXIV, pp. 85-6.

taneously with the professors of other religions, and still something within me tells me that, for all that deep veneration I show to these several religions, I am all the more a Hindu, none the less for it.

Nearly 40 or 38 years ago, I went to England as a lad and the first religious book that was placed into my hands was the *Light of Asia*. I had read nothing of any religion in the world, nothing therefore of Hinduism. I knew of Hinduism what my parents taught me, not directly but indirectly, that is, by their practice, and I knew a little more of it from a Brahmin to whom they sent me in order to learn *Rama Raksha*[1]. That was the stock with which I sailed for England. So, when I found myself in possession of the *Light of Asia*, I devoured it.

From page to page I went; I was really an indifferent reader of literature, but I could not resist the temptation that each page afforded to me and I closed the book with deep veneration for the expounding or teaching which has been so beautifully expressed by Sir Edwin Arnold. I read the book again when I had commenced the practice of my profession in South Africa. At that time, I had read something of the other great religions of the world, but the second study of that book did not diminish my veneration. Beyond that I have practically no acquaintance with Buddhism. I read some more literature in the Yeravda Jail, but I know that the reason why I am called upon to preside at such functions, whether they were in connection with Buddha or Mahavira or even with Jesus Christ, is that I endeavour to follow to the best of my ability such of these masters' teachings as my limited understanding enables me to appreciate. Many friends consider that I am expressing in my own life the teachings of Buddha. I accept their testimony and I am free to confess that I am trying my level best to follow these teachings. Unlike Buddhistic professors and unlike also many Hindu students—I was going to say philosophers—I draw no distinction between the essential teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism. In my opinion, Buddha lived Hinduism in his own life. He was no doubt a reformer of his terrible time, that is to say he was a reformer deeply in earnest and counted no cost or pain great for achieving the reform which he thought was indispensable for his own growth and for the uplift of the body. If historical records are correct, the blind Brahmins of that period rejected his reform because they were selfish. But the masses were not philosophers who whiled away their time in philosophizing.

[1] A prayer in Sanskrit, seeking Lord Rama's protection and grace

They were philosophers in action, they had robust common sense and so they brushed aside the beast in the Brahmins, that is to say, selfishness, and they had no hesitation in recognizing in Buddha the true exponent of their own faith. And so, being myself also one of the masses living in their midst, I found that Buddhism is nothing but Hinduism reduced to practice in terms of the masses. And, therefore, sometimes the learned men are not satisfied with the incredibly simple teachings of Buddha. They go to it for the satisfaction of their intellect and they are disappointed. Religion is pre-eminently a matter of the heart and a man who approaches it with intellectual pride is doomed to disappointment.

I make bold to say that Buddha was not an atheist. God refuses to see any person, any devotee who goes in with his pride. He believes not in men rubbing their noses on the ground, he wants not to see the marks on the noses, and some of you may not know that many Mussalmans really carry these marks on their foreheads as they lie prostrate in their mosques, rub their foreheads day after day so that they have got the scar on their forehead about the circumference of a rupee, sometimes, even larger. God does not want the marks. He sees through and through. A man may cut his nose and rub it on the ground, but God will not recognize him who will turn his back upon a man with pointed nose, if his heart is not bruised and blood does not flow freely from his heart. He recognizes that as his own. And the masses, not knowing what pride is, approach him in all humility and become the splendid philosophers in action, and we can freely follow them. That, in my opinion, is the essential teaching of Buddhism. It is pre-eminently a religion of the masses. I do not despair. I do not for one moment consider that Buddhism has been banished from India. Every essential characteristic of Buddhism, I see, is being translated into action in India, much more perhaps than in China, Ceylon and Japan, which nominally profess Buddhism. I make bold to say that we in India translate Buddhism into action far more and far better than our Burmese friends do. It is impossible to banish Buddha. You cannot deprive him of his birth in India. In his own life, he made out for himself an imperishable name. He lives today in the lives of millions of human beings. What does it matter whether we go to a little temple and worship his image or whether we even take his name. My Hinduism teaches me that, if my heart is pure, I may mispronounce the name of Sri Rama as Mara, still I can speak it with as much force as may, even more than, the learned Brahmins. So, I say to Dr. Dharmapala, what

does it matter whether he can count upon the support of so many men, or whether a lady from Honolulu contributes a huge sum or not. Buddha has taught us, in my humble opinion, that it is not necessary for millions to associate themselves with one man who seeks for truth.

Let each one say for himself how much of the message of mercy and pity that Buddha came to deliver we have translated into our own lives, and in so much as we have translated that message in our own lives are we fit to pay our homage to that great Lord, Master and Teacher of mankind. So long as the world lasts, I have not a shadow of doubt that he will rank among the greatest of teachers of mankind. The thoughts that Buddha gave about 2,500 years ago will never vanish—thoughts leave also a mark, though going at snail's pace. It is still germinating, though one may find that Buddhism, like every other religion, at the present moment is really decadent. I am optimistic enough to feel that a day is dawning when all these great religions will be purged of all frauds, hypocrisy, humbug, untruthfulness, incredulity and all that may be described under the term "degradation". They will be purified of that fraud and we will see a day dawned when he who learns to see will find that truth and love, after all, are two faces of a coin. That and that alone is the only current coin and every other is a base coin.

May God help us to realize the message that the Lord Buddha delivered to mankind so many hundred years ago and may we, each one of us, endeavour to translate that message in our lives, whether we call ourselves Hindus or not.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-5-1925

24. *SPEECH AT LOHOGUNJ*[1]

May 8, 1925

Mr. Gandhi, in acknowledging the address and purse, delivered a short speech and said that he was sorry that he could not bring the Ali Brothers as they were busy in their own work. If they wanted swaraj, they had to make up their mind. It was for this reason the Congress had declared that swaraj was to be obtained by love and non-violence, and the Congress repeatedly expressed that all people, irrespective of religion, would devote their heart

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Lohogunj, a business centre in Dacca, in the afternoon and was presented with an address and a purse of Rs. 5,500 on behalf of the people of Vikrampur.

and soul to the work, and asked them to remove untouchability. Their religion instructed them not to hate anybody. He appealed to them to spin at least half an hour daily and wear hand-woven khaddar. He was sorry to say that very few people had come with khaddar on even now. They should understand their work and spin on the charkha. He further urged them to send their sons and daughters to national schools. Referring to the purse, he said that the money presented to him would not be used for him, but would be spent in charkha and looms and hence he appealed to them to subscribe the promised amount[1]. There was no use seeing him or hearing his speech. If they promised to do that, it would be of immense profit to them and their country. He hoped and prayed that his instructions would be carried out.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-5-1925

25. SPEECH AT MALIKANDA[2]

May 8, 1925

In the course of his speech, Mahatmaji said it pained him very much to find that some of them were not clad in khaddar. He wanted to speak to them about three things and he was confident that, if they translated his message into practice, swaraj would come to them automatically. The first thing to be followed in this connection was that the Hindus and Mahomedans should live in complete harmony. They should be tolerant towards each other and love each other. Mahatmaji emphasized that the curse of untouchability should go. Finally, he strongly urged the audience to wear khaddar and to take to the spinning-wheel. It might not be necessary for them to spin for their livelihood but, if they were to stop the huge drain of the country's wealth, they should spin at least half an hour a day. He hoped that under the able guidance of Dr. Prafulla Chandra they would soon learn to spin and give up foreign cloth. He had heard that the barbers and washermen of the place would not serve *Namasudras*. This was untouchability. The essence of the Hindu religion was truth, non-violence and love. For barbers and washermen not to serve *Namasudras* was not love, but hatred.

The Hindu, 9-5-1925

[1] Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh had earlier referred to a target of Rs. 15,000.

[2] Malikanda was the venue of a khadi exhibition. Gandhiji's speech was in Hindi, but was rendered into Bengali.

26. *REMARKS AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, DIGHIRPUR*[1]

May 9, 1925

I am shocked at these wheels. No wonder, we fail in our attempt to popularize the charkha here. I am glad I have come here. Otherwise, I should have blamed the villagers in case of failure. Now I see that the fault is all ours. Look at the rickety wheels and the thick spindles. They have to turn and turn the wheel before they can coax a thread to come out. And look at the horrid sound they make. How can the boys sing whilst spinning, if the wheel does not sing in harmony with their music? The only consolation is that the boys know the art. They have taken to it like fish to water, they have got the cunning of the fingers and I can see that in spite of the wretched condition of the wheels they are drawing out beautiful yarn. If the wheels were better and the spindles thinner, they could easily spin double the present quantity. Your maximum speed you say is 300 yards an hour. I promise it will be 600 yards as soon as you have reformed the wheels. The dexterity with which your boys handle them should give you an idea of the immense possibilities of spinning, and you yourself must do a year's penance to master the art and the technique of the wheel if you do not know it today.

Young India, 21-5-1925

27. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DIGHIRPUR*[2]

May 9, 1925

Gandhiji, addressing the gathering which numbered more than ten thousand, said that he was sorry to find that the attempt made by the Congress people to remove untouchability was not successful. Defending his attitude regarding untouchability, he stated he had never said that anybody should take food in the same plate with a *Namasudra*. He would never drink water polluted even by his own mother, but if his mother or anybody

[1] Gandhiji addressed these to Jatindranath Kushari, who was in charge of the school where 30 students were learning spinning. This report is an extract from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in East Bengal, under the title "With Gandhiji in Bengal".

[2] The Union Board of Dighirpur presented an address to Gandhiji on behalf of the people of the locality.

else gave him water in a clean pot, it would be a sin if he refused it. Similarly it would be a sin if barbers and washermen did not serve their *Namasudra* brethren. He asserted that the Hindu religion meant service. Service meant equality and love. Swaraj was impossible without Hindu-Muslim unity. That was why he used to take one of the Ali Brothers along with him in his wanderings. He was pleased to recognize that there was some khaddar and charkha work in the locality. He wanted to kill the poverty in Hindusthan, but he was sorry to find that very few people were clad in khaddar. He was pleased that the Union Board had presented five charkhas free on the occasion of his visit.

Finally, Gandhiji urged them to be respectful towards their parents, to love their teachers and all the members of their family and to be on friendly terms with their fellow-students.

The Hindu, 11-5-1925

28. SPEECH AT KHADI WORKERS' MEETING, TALTOLA[1]

May 9, 1925

I must tell you in the first place that I have never said that charkha is our only salvation. I have said that swaraj for the masses is impossible without the charkha. But I am prepared here to advance the first also. I would ask you to exercise your imagination. And just as you visualize gods and goddesses on the Himalayas because your mind is filled with sacredness, you will also visualize the tremendous possibilities of spinning if you fill your minds with the elaborate details of a successful working of the spinning programme. It requires a tremendous effort to keep things going as we are doing, much more to make millions spin. Every one of us will have to take charge of little details and be under exact discipline. Universalization of spinning means the automatic solution of many other questions. Take the untouchability problem. It is impossible to universalize the wheel without tackling untouchability. Do you know that the untouchables would have nothing to do with khadi if we had not

[1] A meeting of khadi workers was held, but it was thought more convenient to hold it on the boat and accordingly the workers accompanied Gandhiji to Narayan Ganj. Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh whô was with Gandhiji remarked that the workers' faith was waning: "Most of them do not believe that charkha is our only salvation, though they do believe in the economic value of it. Some of us feel that it is unnecessary to be Congress members. Pray clear our doubts and fortify our faith if you can."

made them our own? They would say, "What shall we do with khadi when we are treated as untouchables?" And unless they co-operate, you cannot achieve the full khadi programme. And so also for the Hindu-Muslim question. The two things hang together. You can thus see that spinning alone does lead to swaraj.

But I want to take you a little deeper. Do you know the Government have their hands on every string of the violin except the one which is in my hand? That is non-violence. You can win swaraj only with non-violence and never with violence. If you are convinced of that, you will not take time to be convinced that by spinning alone can you win swaraj. For, non-violence in action can be achieved by nothing but a successful working out of a peaceful programme of the universalization of the spinning-wheel. How will you solve the Hindu-Muslim question but by getting the Hindu to work in the cause of khadi for the Mussalman, and *vice versa*? And in order that you get the Mussalman and the Hindu and the untouchable to work together, you have to plod away in faith and confidence in yourselves. Take first the smoothest channels, leave the difficult ones alone. These are the maharajas, nawabs, etc. Let us fill the land with a net-work of expert carders and spinners and make the spinning-wheel the centre of the whole programme. Don't say the atmosphere is spoiled. Let there be dissensions. You will spin in spite of them. And you will see that all about you would be spinning like you one day. If you are clean, all about you are bound to be clean one day. Shall I say good-bye to *brahmacharya*, truth and ahimsa, because the opposite is going on all around me? No, I must work away in the faith that my method is right even though I may be the sole representative of it.

"And how will the spinners bring swaraj?" you ask. I say, nothing will need to be done after you have universalized the spinning-wheel. You will have acquired a power and a strength which everybody will automatically recognize.

But possibly the struggle before us may be long. There is no shorter cut. I can make the Congress hum with a thousand genuine workers. A million non-spinners whose sole business is to give four annas each will be worse than an encumbrance. I have faith in God and in the fact that the few shall act, when the time comes.

Young India, 21-5-1925

29. SPEECH AT MALKHANAGAR

May 9, 1925

The first thing is that I never said that we could win swaraj merely by spinning, though I believe that we can. But I have certainly said on many occasions that unless we spin we cannot win swaraj. However, I am ready to prove to you that both the statements are true. What do we mean when we speak of spinning? We mean that we should make it universal. Spinning means learning all the other processes, such as ginning and carding, and getting the yarn produced woven into cloth. What an effort is needed to do all these things ourselves and set crores of people spinning in that sense! Such an effort implies setting up an organization through the length and the breadth of the country. Is it a small thing to set up a system like the one that obtains on big liners where everyone obeys the captain's orders and those who do not can be shot dead? And when you set crores to spin, the problem of untouchability will be solved, even that of Hindu-Muslim unity will be solved. Why do I say that the problem of untouchability will be solved? Today the untouchables work for khadi for my sake. They told me in Madras that, when the people regarded them as untouchable, why should they labour for the people and weave khadi for them? All the same, they weave for my sake. When untouchability has disappeared, they will of their own free will take sincere interest in this work, and, when they do so, untouchability too will disappear. Can the khadi movement succeed unless Hindus and Muslims work unitedly? In order, thus, to get all communities to spin, you will have to continue living in this marshy place.

But you may ask how spinning can mean swaraj. My reply is that when you have made spinning universal, the three big problems which face the Congress today will be solved. And when all the three are solved, what more will remain? When these three things are done we shall be in a position to insist on the fulfilment of our conditions. Thereafter, the British may leave if they choose or stay on if they like to remain here on our terms. If you ask me whether I would co-operate with the British against whom we have carried on such a long and determined struggle and who have perpetrated such atrocities on us, I would say, "Yes, I would certainly co-operate, because I want to convert even enemies into friends."

In order to understand how swaraj can be won by spinning, you must be clear about one thing. It is this—by what means do you want to win it? If you want to win it by violent means, you may give up the thought of spinning. But I can see it as clearly as I do the things before me that you will not be able to overcome the British by violent means. In the game we are playing today, they have all the pieces in their hand, and only one is in mine—non-violence. It is only by means of that piece that we can possibly win against them. If you admit this, you will understand that you have no choice but to take up spinning, for the spinning-wheel is the centre round which the other items of the non-violent programme revolve.

The atmosphere has not been vitiated. The Government wants fighting, it will even find people who delight in creating discord, but I count on you to say that you will go on spinning no matter what obstacles are placed in your way. Because others give up spinning, should you on that account stop spinning? If others forsake purity, *brahmacharya* and non-violence, will you also do so?

Those who sincerely devote themselves to spinning in this way will certainly come forward when the time comes [for action]. I can get no work done through three crore members if they do not spin. But I can rouse the whole country if there are 300 sincere persons. If you ask me why I believe these people will come forward for a fight, I cannot answer your question. I shall merely say that God will prompt them to join the fight. I have such faith in God that I rely upon Him, when the time comes to rouse everyone. What happened in the Transvaal? Till the last moment, no one was asked [to join the fight]. But when the coolies saw that all of us were in prison, they too came out and followed us. Hurbatsingh[1] was a free man. He did not have to pay the [poll] tax, but he too was inspired, and went to jail and died there. The mines were turned into jails in which the workers were confined, and they endured countless atrocities. How could I imagine that all this would happen? It was, in fact, the result of my faith in God. Hence, if people ask me when I propose to start civil disobedience, I give them no reply. I merely say that God will create the circumstances for it.

Now I come to the question what purpose is served by our continuing as members of the Congress. I admit it serves no great purpose, but our leaving it will hurt the Swarajists needlessly

[1] *Vide* Vol. XII, pp. 319-20.

and they will believe that we do not want even to extend our support to them. This year, at any rate, we must become members of the Congress and do as much constructive work as possible. If they do not want even this next year, then we shall see what to do. We shall, then, be able to set up a spinning association. Truly speaking, however, such an association will be the result of our labours during this year. Even if you believe that nothing is to be gained by remaining in the Congress, there is at any rate no harm in doing so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1925

30. *INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA*

May 9, 1925

Mr. Gandhi agreed to the existence of individuality in different localities as suggested by Mr. Ghosh and he said that the work should proceed on the individuality of each locality,[1] but he said that charkha might form the main part of the constructive work whereas other things might be added to it consulting each individual case. Charkha, he said, could be universally introduced in every locality. Mr. Ghosh then referred to his Faridpur speech[2] wherein he said it required a strong heart and not a strong arm to deliver the country. Mr. Gandhi said that we might get swaraj by a strong heart, but to maintain internal peace and order as well as to protect the country from external enemies, it could require a strong arm. Mr. Gandhi in reply said that he answered the question in the *Young India*[3] and he did not say that a strong arm was not required. Rather the police and the army would be necessary when we would get swaraj to protect the country, but first of all we must have a strong heart to attain swaraj.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-5-1925

[1] Kali Mohan Ghosh had asked Gandhiji whether charkha, as a part of the constructive activity, would be equally suitable for people of all localities, with their different individual characteristics, and whether organizational work should not take these variations into consideration.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Bengal Provincial Conference, Faridpur", 3-5-1925.

[3] *Vide* "At it Again", 7-5-1925.

31. UNTOUCHABLE SAINT NANDA

Shri Mahadev has culled the story of Nanda from the literature of the South. I wish that everyone should read it with interest. Let no one believe that the story of Nanda is anyone's invention. There may be exaggeration in it. But there indeed lived a saintly *Antyaja* named Nanda six hundred years ago. That, by the strength of his character, he earned his right to enter a temple and that even today he is worshipped by Hindus as an avatar is not to be doubted. The sanctifying story of Nanda teaches us that though the condition in which one is born is the fruit of one's actions in the previous life, the Creator has left scope for human effort, so that an *Antyaja* like Nanda could, by the strength of his character, purify himself during his life and was regarded by others as purified. The Brahmins accepted him with love. If Nanda could become pure during his life, we must believe that all of us have that power in us. Every *Antyaja*, therefore, should have the right to enter our temples for worship.

I hope that no one will advance the argument that Nanda had entered fire [to prove the purity of his character], and that *Antyajas* are welcome to do what he did and then enter temples. The story of his going through fire is pure poetry. Or, even if we believe it to be true, he entered fire of his own free will. The vast majority of Brahmins were ready to permit Nanda to enter the temple for the purpose of *darshan*[1] on condition only that he should take a bath. The only moral we should draw from this story is that an *Antyaja* can, by right effort, purify himself during his present life. That is to say, the *Antyajas* should be free to enter temples on the same condition on which other Hindus can.

This much for the so-called caste Hindus.

Nanda's story is one which should inspire the *Antyajas* and bring purity in their lives. I for one wish it should be read in every *Antyaja* home. But they should not content themselves merely with reading it. Every *Antyaja* should do what Nanda did. Let every *Antyaja* show Nanda's purity, as also his patience, his compassion, his truthfulness and his determination. Nanda was the very embodiment of satyagraha. He converted atheists to believers in God. May every *Antyaja* read the story of Nanda and

[1] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

be inspired by it to strive to rid himself of his faults and have the strength to succeed in his effort.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1925

32. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday, Vaishakha Vad 3 [May 10, 1925][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL[2],

Herewith Puniya's letter which you want back. You will see that I have made use of it in *Young India* as well as in *Navajivan*.

I have already written to you about Chi. Rukhi[3]. I am learning here many new things about khadi work. Some of the work done here surpasses ours. Is our spinning and weaving being done smoothly and regularly? My health has been very nice so far. If Ramniklal[4] has come back, tell him that there was a letter from Charitravijayji[5] in which he has categorically denied everything. Let him collect as much evidence as he can about . . . and . . . I have not forgotten both these things, nor do I wish to. Do you know the facts about . . . ? There are allegations against him of embezzlement and adultery, and those who have informed me are firm in making those charges. If you or Chhaganlal[6] have come to know anything about it, please let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Ba that I met Harilal[7]. I talked with him for three hours. Harilal particularly told me that Ba should not go to Calcutta. At present he is staying with some of his friends.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6206. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri.

[1] The contents of the letter suggest that it was written during Gandhiji's Bengal tour in 1925.

[2] Gandhiji's nephew and associate; manager, Sabarmati Ashram; member, All-India Khadi Board

[3] Addressee's daughter

[4] Ramniklal Modi, an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram

[5] Founder of Mahavir Ratna Ashram, a centre for training students and others for propagation of khadi, at Sonegarh in Saurashtra

[6] Addressee's brother and a close associate of Gandhiji since his South African days

[7] Gandhiji's eldest son

33. SPEECH AT MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION, PURANBAZAR

May 10, 1925

Replying to the address[1], Gandhiji at the outset expressed his keen sense of regret at his inability to bring either of the Ali Brothers with him. He said that the mere singing of his praise was of no use. What he wanted was complete Hindu-Muslim unity. Untouchability should go. He admitted that it did not exist in Bengal in the form in which it existed in South India, but from the *Namasudras* of Bengal, he came to learn of the iniquitous treatment which was being meted out to them. To remove poverty from Hindustan, they should all take to the charkha and wear khadi. He wanted to purge the country of all sins, including the vice of drinking. It was his firm conviction that swaraj would never come to them unless they worked up the triple programme laid down by him.

The Hindu, 11-5-1925

34. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, CHANDPUR[2]

May 10, 1925

Mahatmaji at first thanked the Reception Committee and the Municipality for the addresses (*manpatras* as he called them) they had given him. It was only the outcome of their love for him that the references to his virtues were made therein. Accepting their love he said he would pray to God for acquiring those virtues and he, therefore, accepted the encomiums as a token of their love.

Referring to the expression of disappointment mentioned in the Reception Committee's address so far as the amount of work was concerned, he said that there was nothing to be disheartened, if one would stick to one's work with earnestness, spirit of sacrifice and humility.

God said that we should always stick to the performance of our duty irrespective of the result.

Mahatmaji emphasized this, saying our religion teaches us to remain engaged to duty. He said that he understood the reason of the slow progress

[1] Presented earlier to Gandhiji

[2] A public meeting was held on the Railway Ground in the morning. Hand-spun yarn and addresses printed on khaddar were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the people and the Municipality. Gandhiji's reply in Hindi was translated into Bengali by Satish Chandra Dasgupta of Khadi Pratisthan, Sodepur.

of their work; it was because the country had very lately entered into the sphere of real action.

Up to this time we had only talked of work, but did not apply ourselves seriously to undertake work. From the period of words we were approaching the period of action. We have to advance towards the spiritual life through the *sadhana* of karma now that we had stepped into the region of action. We realized our real situation ten years before when address, eulogy and clapping of hands were the fashion of political platforms. We had thousands of workers. Nowadays it is no wonder that the number of workers at the charkha are found less.

Mahatmaji said that he did not feel at all disappointed at the abnormal decrease in the number of Congress members and no increase in the number of charkha. He felt that it was giving him more determination for work. For this reason he urged upon his brothers and sisters to have faith in their work. He said he would consider thirty members of the Congress who fulfil the conditions of the spinning franchise, Hindu-Muslim unity and untouchability more valuable assets than one crore of Congress members who would pay four-anna subscription and do nothing. He said that five or seven real and genuine coins were more valuable than one crore of counterfeit coins which should be thrown away into the river and discarded.

So the spinning franchise of the Congress is only a test to determine the real workers and it would help in finding out counterfeit materials. If anybody would say that he has no faith in charkha, he must give up charkha, but if you have faith in charkha you need not be disappointed because others do not take to it. You must be alive to your duty and go on with your work.

Mahatmaji emphatically said that, even if the charkha was given up by the last man of the country, he would alone remain in his house and work with his charkha silently for 8 hours a day.

He again referred to the miserable condition of the people arising out of want mentioned in the Reception Committee's address. He said he heard of water hyacinth pest in this part of the country which is greatly damaging yearly crop.

In my opinion, it is owing to the habit of indolence that we are suffering, and it is owing to the very same reason that the water hyacinth is increasing without any check. It is for the deliverance of the people of India from their miseries and adversities that I am preaching the gospel of charkha. Along with charkha, other items of work necessary for our deliverance could be introduced. Charkha gives hope even in the midst of dis-

appointment. Man is his own enemy as well as his own friend.[1] Remember God when you are in difficulty. God is so cruel that, unless you be dutiful, you cannot expect God's favour in any work. I exhort all to remember God and to go on working and working.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-5-1925

35. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, CHANDPUR

May 10, 1925

The Mahatma met the students at National School and the proceedings there were of extreme interest. He first called those boys who would consider themselves to be most wicked. None offered at the call at first. Later on some boys came forward admitting that they were wicked boys. Mahatmaji then called those who considered themselves to be ignorant and silly. A big lot of boys offered themselves as belonging to the latter category which aroused laughter. Mahatmaji then explained the virtues of a wicked boy as well as those of ignorant boys and he gave them some instructions which were heard with attention. He asked them to realize the growing poverty of the country. Boys who spin the charkhas, he said, could feel this. Therefore he urged them to try their best to spin yarn daily. The boy who kept no ideal in view in spite of many disappointments was a naughty boy, and an idiot boy was one who felt satisfaction at nothing. The more he produced yarn, the more would he think that he had done his duty. In the struggle for swaraj these sets of boys are indispensable. Finally Mahatma Gandhi urged them to be respectful towards their parents, to love their teachers and all the members of the family and to be on friendly terms with their colleagues. With these words he gave them his hearty blessing.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-5-1925

36. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHANDPUR[2]

May 10, 1925

Gandhiji began by saying that, as the Muslims predominated in the meeting, he wanted to tell them about the talk he had with the Ali Brothers in connection with Hindu-Muslim unity. They had decided that they should not fight again. It was impossible to get swaraj as long as they did not live together. They should resolve not to quarrel with each other and they should

[1] A reference to the *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 5

[2] Gandhiji addressed another public meeting in the evening attended by over 5,000 people.

work at the charkha. Neither the Hindus nor the Muslims were doing any spinning work.

Incidentally, Gandhiji referred to the fact that the Muslims wore less khaddar and did less spinning. He appealed to them to do more work. They should remember what splendid work Sir P. C. Ray did during the Eastern Bengal Floods and how by the help of the charkha he assisted many Muslim sisters. Gandhiji also appealed to the Muslim sisters to spin. Crores of Hindus were dying of starvation. For them there was no other alternative but to take to the charkha. For this reason he was travelling in Hindustan and was appealing to them to take up charkha work. Then and then alone would they be able to drive poverty out of the country. Everyone he had spoken to had agreed that the charkha should be worked and that foreign cloth should be discarded. In spite of their admission, they did not use swadeshi cloth. The reason was they did not love their country and secondly they had no regard for their country.

Referring to untouchability Gandhiji said that the *Namasudras* were suffering a great deal, though not so much as in Southern India.[1]

The Hindu, 12-5-1925

37. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Sunday [On or after *May 10, 1925*][2]

DEAR BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I trust you; but to seek financial assistance on someone's behalf is outside my province. If I were to act thus with my rich friends our relations would become defiled. In this matter you must solve your difficulties by your own efforts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2370

[1] Later Gandhiji addressed a women's meeting and advised them to follow in the footsteps of Sita, and not to put on foreign cloth.

[2] The letter appears to have been written after the one to the addressee on May 3, 1925. The Sunday following it was May 10.

38. *A WORKER'S DIFFICULTY*

[*May 11, 1925*]

Many suggestions are being handed to me during my Bengal tour. I appreciate them all, even though I may not be able to adopt them. Here is one from a staunch worker:[1]

I am writing these notes on my silence day[2]. Satish Babu of the Khadi Pratisthan is sitting by me. I therefore handed the suggestion to him for reply as he knows the Bengal conditions much better than I can ever hope to. Here is his reply:

> The writer thinks that the real difficulty about the spread of khaddar in Bengal lies in the high price of cotton. The remedy suggested is to introduce and encourage the cultivation of cotton.
>
> It is surely a difficulty in Bengal that cotton is not grown everywhere. But it is not the only difficulty or a serious difficulty. Manchester buys her cotton from America and Bombay and sends her mill-products to India. Surely Bengal can get all the cotton she wants at any of the cotton marts of India. Lacs of rupees worth of cotton is grown in Bengal and sent away from the ports of Chittagong and Calcutta. Bengal does not utilize for home-spinning a fraction of the cotton she grows. She can use all her Chittagong and Comilla produce for home-spinning and buy what more she requires in the markets of Bihar and United Provinces.
>
> The real difficulty in the way of the spread of khadi is neither its high price nor the absence of cultivation of cotton. What is wanting for the spread of khadi is a desire to spin and use khadi and an organization to create and cater for the desire.
>
> The Ashram from which the writer sends the note may be made a centre for selling "cheap" cotton, i.e., cotton at fair market price. The Ashram might train up an expert in spinning and carding and then demonstrate to the sisters in the neighbourhood that with good slivers and a good charkha it is a pleasure to spin. It is only when spinning becomes irksome that imaginary difficulties about the spread of khadi crop up.

[1] Not reproduced here. The worker had pointed out the comparative costliness of khaddar because of the high price of cotton which could be remedied only through extensive cultivation and hoped that Gandhiji would stress the importance of this during his tour of Bengal.

[2] Monday, May 11, 1925

> If the sisters of Bengal are helped from organizations where charkha experts are in a mood to serve, then every difficulty will disappear and I may even see cultivators introducing cotton cultivation without much coaxing.
>
> Spinning is the central process. There are processes before it and after it. Cotton cultivation, ginning and carding precede, spinning and weaving come after. We must confine our attention to efficient carding, spinning and weaving now. Serious effort made by determined men from efficient organizations will over-ride all difficulties and make spinning a success in Bengal. I hope to see such a day in the near future.

Whilst I fully endorse the reply, I would add that the men require as much organizing for spinning as women. Without the men organizing, it would be most difficult to get the women to respond. We need an army of voluntary spinners before we shall be able to organize women spinners for hire. It is only through husbands or fathers or brothers that we may hope to improve the wheel. The vast majority of workers are males. They are not able even to see the manner in which the women are working. But from the spinning exhibitions I visit, I am able to imagine what is going on behind the scene. The wheels, if they are properly looked after, can yield twice as much yarn as they are now doing. This means double earnings with very little effort. Sometimes it is painful to see spinners working at rickety charkhas with heavy rods almost for spindles. If the wheels were made firm and the rods replaced with the right-size spindles, the output will immediately double itself.

As for cotton-growing, all the parts of Bengal are not fit for growing cotton. Importation to some extent will always be, therefore, necessary. Every new industry requires protection. State protection we may not get as yet. Voluntary protection is, therefore, the only remedy. It can be afforded by free spinning. That is one object of the Congress franchise. The second method is to beg cotton and, like Gujarat, sell slivers or cotton at half price and getting the yarn woven also at half price for those who would spin enough for their wants. Comparison with the mills is a useless pastime. It is conceivable that Japan and Manchester may even practically give away their cloth to kill the reviving cottage industry of home-spinning. There must be, even then, people who will not have foreign or mill-made cloth even as a gift. It is they through whom we may expect to spread the charkha and make it a success.

Young India, 21-5-1925

39. *INTERVIEW TO HARDAYAL NAG*

CHANDPUR,
[Before *May 12, 1925*]

Gandhiji was interviewed by Babu Hardayal Nag and gave replies to questions put to him.

Q[UESTION]: Do you still hold that swaraj cannot come from abroad?

A[NSWER]: Yes, most emphatically.

Q. Then why did you not controvert Mr. Das's new theory of swaraj by way of gift and necessarily within the Empire?

A. I do not think that Mr. Das has said any such thing in his presidential address at Faridpur. I read the address quite differently from what you do. For Deshbandhu Das does not say that it is necessarily within the British Empire. On the contrary, he adheres to the formula—"Within the Empire, if possible; without it, if necessary."

Q. Do you not feel that certain classes of people are trying to change the colour of administration only, but not its character?

A. I know that some people merely want to change the colour but not the character.

Q. I venture to suggest that the Swarajists are trying to add another class to these classes for capturing the services with certain amount of false power transferred to them.

A. I hope not; nor do I believe it is so. I know Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru. I am convinced that they will not be satisfied with mere change of colour.

Q. I cite the Calcutta Corporation as an instance. It is now manned by Swarajists, as far as possible. The Swarajists, I suggest, want to capture the provincial and local administrations only to man them with Swarajists.

A. I do not know what is happening in the Calcutta Corporation.

Q. I and many others think that swaraj must grow from within and it must be built in the village and we accept charkha as the only weapon for the foundation for it. Do you agree?

A. I literally endorse your view. But we feel that our task is very difficult on account of the apathy of the Swarajists. In

Bengal, almost all the Congress organizations are in their hands and they have no faith in charkha. That being the case, charkha is suffering most on account of want of provincial or district organizations.

Q. Do you approve of any separate organization in favour of charkha and khadi movement?

A. I shall be very sorry if I discover that the Swarajists have no faith in the spinning-wheel. I am aware that some of them do not possess the same faith in it that you and I have, but so far as my knowledge goes, I have not met a single Swarajist who has shown his disbelief in the spinning-wheel. Assuming that they do not believe in the charkha at all, I am still unable to understand your deduction that their apathy is hampering your or my progress. On the contrary, you and I should to that extent make greater effort. I, therefore, do not consider a separate organization for the development of spinning necessary, so long as the Swarajists do not repudiate the spinning-wheel.

Q. Do you recognize the fact that the two parties are not pulling on well in their respective work?

A. I do not recognize the fact, but if the two parties are not pulling on well, I would then blame the non-Swarajists more than the Swarajists, for the simple reason that the former had not the slightest occasion to stand in the latter's path. They at least have, I expect, made their final choice. Let them abide by it and live up to it.

Q. But considering the fact that you are the accredited leader of both the parties, does your duty end in blaming this party or that party?

A. Yes, certainly, because though I may be the nominal head of both the parties, I am myself a non-Swarajist. Therefore, I am entitled to blame the non-Swarajists more.

Q. Many of us have of course individually implicit faith in non-violent non-co-operation as a means to win swaraj. Now it is evident that the Swarajists are trying to discredit non-co-operation only for their class or party purposes and have already made gestures for co-operation, of course on certain terms quite immaterial to the people of the country. Under the circumstances, in his presidential address at Faridpur, Mr. Das has declared non-co-operation as a failure. In your speech, subsequently made at Faridpur, you laid stress on non-violence and truthfulness, but you did not say a word to save non-co-operation from the attack of Deshbandhu Das. Will you illuminate us on this point?

A. I have discovered no attack on the part of Mr. Das on non-co-operation. Therefore, non-co-operation was not a relevant matter. Moreover, I have debarred myself from saying a word upon non-co-operation from the Congress platform, being the author of the resolution suspending non-co-operation at Belgaum. But my own individual view is known to the world and my personal abstention from co-operation is an ocular demonstration of my view.

Q. Of course at Faridpur you spoke not as President of the All-India Congress Committee, but in your individual character and the phrases you used there were non-violence and truthfulness but not a word about non-co-operation. To my mind, non-violence without non-co-operation is meaningless. There is non-violence even in cowardice. If you have a firm faith in non-violent non-co-operation, how can you allow any Swarajist to speak against it without any protest?

A. As I have told you there is not a word, so far as I am aware, said in Deshbandhu's address against non-co-operation. And we should also recollect that I was speaking on the creed of the Congress. The creed of the Congress makes no mention of non-co-operation. But it does make mention of "peaceful and legitimate means" and I took care in my speech to say that I paraphrased these two terms by the adjectives: non-violence and truthfulness.

Q. Your declaration at Faridpur is that you have given your general power of attorney to Deshbandhu Das to do what he is doing in the Council. Anyone can take it by implication that his performances in the Council are on behalf of you as principal, he being only an agent of you. No one can be blamed for taking such a view of your statement according to the law relating to principal and agent. Is that the case? Do you support also what Deshbandhu Das does in the Council?

A. When I spoke of Deshbandhu Das or Swarajists being agents I spoke, as an Irishman once spoke of himself as one of the proprietors of the Empire, as one of the shareholders of the concern called the Indian National Congress. And the Congress having given authority to the Swarajists to prosecute their Council programme, I think I was quite correct in describing the Swarajists as holders of my general power of attorney, so far as their Council work is concerned. I need not, therefore, on that account endorse every detail of the Swarajists' policy in the provincial Councils or Legislative Assembly. As a wise and practical man, having once given my general power of attorney to the

agents of my own choice, I do not bother my head about what they are doing.

Q. If the Swarajists succeed in obtaining a concession from the bureaucracy based on a certain agreement, will you be a party to that agreement?

A. Oh, when the terms of any agreement with the bureaucracy are out, I shall have to consider them. I have issued no power of attorney to anybody to conclude any settlement with the Government. I therefore reserve, like every individual Congressman, my full right to scrutinize any terms of settlement that may be proposed for national acceptance.

Q. Do you understand what Deshbandhu Das means by provincial autonomy?

A. I can guess.

Q. Then what is it?

A. I take the word in the dictionary sense of the term.

Q. Can't I expect a clear answer from you on this point?

A. That is the answer. For I have closely followed Deshbandhu's address at Faridpur, but he has not gone into details there. Therefore, I am entitled to give provincial autonomy the meaning that is given to it in the English language.

Q. Is not the Faridpur speech liable to the interpretation that Deshbandhu Das has changed his views with reference to provincial autonomy?

A. I should think not. That is certainly not my impression.

Q. Then why has he fought shy of the phrase in his presidential address?

A. Has he laid any stress on this matter, I mean upon provincial autonomy? There was no occasion. All that he has laid stress upon is swaraj and swaraj is a term which to me is more inclusive because it goes farther than provincial autonomy.

Q. But can you illuminate us why he studiously avoided the word which he has been preaching so long?

A. For the simple reason that he has used a more general term, an inclusive term.

Q. Can you guess the ultimate result of the work of the Swarajists in Council?

A. I do not need to. Because whenever I want to understand what they have done, I have got the newspaper records to fall

back upon. Further, I have got my own measure for gauging the worth of all such work. And I know that it can be no more and no less than the work that you and I are doing outside and internally. Because those who have gone to the Councils have declared and must declare that their potency depends upon the work done by the people themselves and the power evolved by them for self-rule, I suggest that measure for your and everybody's acceptance. In that case, we need not search the newspaper files nor resort to the dangerous pastime of guessing.

Q. Do you not feel that non-co-operation is suffering most on account of your giving a long rope to the Swarajists?

A. I do not think so at all. Rather, I hold that it is suffering because of the weakness of non-co-operators.

Q. Are you aware that the Swarajists have not yet changed their methods?

A. What method?

Q. Their methods and procedure. I cite this instance. Do you know anything of the supersession of Dr. P. C. Ray's election as President of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Faridpur?

A. I know nothing of it. What was it?

Q. At the time of election Dr. Ray stood second, while Mr. B. N. Sasmal stood first. Mr. Sasmal having resigned, Dr. Ray's election was set aside and Mr. Das was elected President. Do you not know anything about it?

A. I know nothing about it.

Q. If I cite this as an instance of their method, what have you got to say?

A. I cannot give any opinion without hearing the Swarajists and without knowing the full facts.

Q. Are you willing to enquire?

A. I would not lose my time over a thing that is finished.

Q. I bring this matter to your notice as a vivid example of the Swarajists' method. What have you to say to this?

A. I know nothing of their methods whatsoever. Without examining the instances, I am not able to pass any opinion, as I do not want to sit in judgment on the Swarajists or anybody, specially where there is no necessity for it.

Q. When you find the Swarajists have not yet changed their methods, can you accuse the puritans of incompetency?

A. In the first instance, you are assuming that the methods of the Swarajists are questionable. You would, therefore, have to satisfy me on that point. Secondly, I have not accused those whom you are pleased to call puritans, I do not know with what right, of their incompetency. But I have accused them of want of faith in their own mission. And even now, taking for granted for the sake of argument that the Swarajists' methods are questionable, what has that got to do with the purity of the puritans? Need I be impure, if the whole world around me is impure or is not that the time for testing the strength of my purity? I may only add that the puritans have not understood the implication of their claim. If they want to make good their claim, they should not grumble, they should not find fault with anybody in the world, far less with their erstwhile co-workers, but they should silently and surely set their faces against obstacles and they should shine the brightest when the obstacles are the greatest.

Q. Is not the present attitude of the Swarajists worse than their open hostility?

A. If the Swarajists are really apathetic to charkha, I grant that it would be far better to be openly hostile than to be secretly apathetic.

Q. If the Swarajists are really apathetic, is not a separate organization or charkha and khaddar advisable?

A. Yes, certainly.

Q. If that is so, is it premature to think of a separate all-India non-co-operation organization?

A. I think it is premature for the present moment. We must finish this year of grace before pronouncing judgment or taking a decided step.

Q. Many orthodox non-co-operators feel embarrassed to work together with the Swarajists. Can you suggest any other remedy?

A. A good non-co-operator ought not to feel embarrassed in working with the Swarajists. For what is the meaning of working with the Swarajist except to work charkha together with him if you have not got to work together with him in the Councils? I suggest a good non-co-operator will work even with the Viceroy, if the Viceroy will kindly sit down to the charkha.

Q. But Mahatmaji, you should not ignore facts, they are there.

A. I suggest then they are not non-co-operators because they have not understood the secret of non-co-operation. You non-co-operate with measures, not with men.

Q. We appreciate your view, but the fact is that we feel embarrassed. They are obstructing us.

A. I have not seen any statement to corroborate the charge that they are obstructing. If they are not spinning, that is not obstruction. They will obstruct you, when you go to the villages, ask the masses to spin and they say spinning is no good. That is obstruction. But I have not known that that charge can be levelled against a single Swarajist.

Q. Do you not know that the scheme suggested by them for the reconstruction of the villages does not contain any scheme of charkha?

A. I can simply say that it was the Swarajists who organized the exhibition of khaddar at Faridpur and it was a pure charkha exhibition. Deshbandhu Das has laid stress in his presidential address on the constructive programme in the Congress, without which he held that they could achieve nothing. I may further add that I know the family of at least one Swarajist which is devoted to spinning as much as you or I can possibly be.

Q. Your reference to the Faridpur Conference reminds me of another objectionable method of the Swarajists. They invited you to kill the Non-co-operation Movement in Bengal, but they have been disappointed.

A. You are too suspicious, too diffident.

Q. But man proposes, God disposes. Mr. Desai wrote to me from Delhi that Mahatmaji would not visit Bengal very soon. But when you accepted the invitation of the Faridpur Conference, they did not think you would visit Bengal. But they were simply non-plussed when you accepted our invitation. It was to us a heavenly blessing. Do you not know that they did not want you to visit Bengal?

A. I think you are hyper-suspicious.

Q. Well, it is my mental attitude.

A. You are hopelessly wrong, because my tour has been jointly arranged by the Swarajists and non-Swarajists. It is the Swarajists who are taking me to Chittagong and Noakhali, because Chittagong and Noakhali were not on Satish Babu's tour programme.

Q. Did you not notice that the orthodox non-co-operators were conspicuous by their absence at Faridpur?

A. I do not know. Probably they were. If so, it was their fault.

Q. Can you ascribe any reason for it?

A. I cannot, except this that if they were absent, it was their fault.

Q. I suggest the reason is that that was the only way to save their life.

A. I think it is a libel.

Q. Do you feel that this unnatural combination of those having faith in constructive work and those having no faith in Council obstruction is creating a political scepticism in the mass-mind?

A. Mass-mind responds to work and nothing but work. Immediately there is solid work, self-sacrifice, the mass-mind sees it instinctively. Otherwise, the mass-mind goes to sleep like Kumbhakarna[1]. It does not listen at all.

Q. Do you think any political education is necessary for educating the masses?

A. Yes, that is charkha.

Q. If that is so, who should do it?

A. Of course, those who have kept awake a living faith in it. They should become the instructors of the masses.

Q. Do they not need any organization for it?

A. I am now coming from Calcutta, seeing two young men doing their work perfectly, effectively and systematically without any monetary or other aid. They need no organization. That is the beauty of the charkha.

Q. Is any change of heart possible in the hearts of our rulers who boast of tiger qualities?

A. Change of heart is possible, otherwise non-co-operation is of no use. Let there be first a change of heart among the non-co-operators, then there will be a change of heart in the rulers. I have no doubt in my mind about it.

Q. I only refer you to a case in the animal world. Do you think real friendship possible between a tiger and a sheep?

A. No, but that analogy cannot be carried to the human platform because man is man, whether he believes in spinning or in Council obstruction, whether he believes in the cult of the tyrant and the slave or in the brotherhood of man.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-5-1925

[1] Brother of Ravana in the *Ramayana*, who slept for half the year at a stretch

40. *LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR*

ON THE TRAIN,
May 12, 1925

DEAR MR. KETKAR[1],

I have read with pleasure the article on the *Gita Beej* sent me by Mr. Kelkar[2]. I really do not think that the *Gita* is a scientific treatise to be treated scientifically. We may, however, evolve science out of it. Your selection is certainly ingenious and supported by good reasoning. Whether it is the best, I cannot say.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. V. KETKAR, ESQ.
THE "KASARI" OFFICE
POONA CITY

From a photostat: G.N. 7963

41. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHITTAGONG*[3]

May 12, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech said he was grateful for the addresses, but was sorry that he could not bring either of the Ali Brothers with him. He further regretted that Mr. Sen Gupta was also absent. Last time when he visited their place, he was prohibited from speaking by the orders of the Government. He thanked the Municipality for the splendid work they were doing. He did not know whether it was useful to make education compulsory. There were two opinions on the subject. He, however, promised to think over the matter more carefully. He thanked the Municipality for stopping drink and making its employees wear khaddar. Nothing could be

[1] Editor, *Kesari*

[2] Narasinh Chintaman Kelkar; editor of the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta*; a close associate of Tilak; sometime Secretary of the Indian National Congress

[3] Gandhiji arrived in Chittagong at 6 a.m. and addressed an hour later, a meeting of over 20 thousand people. Three addresses were presented to him on behalf of the Municipality, the Gandhi Reception Committee and the Cess-payers' Association of Chittagong. Gandhiji first spoke in Hindi and then in English.

done except by khaddar. Civil disobedience was an impossibility without khaddar. The charkha was necessary to drive poverty out of the country. His movement was for self-purification. He would never say anything which he did not do himself.[1]

I have been just now asked to say a few words in English. I know the Bengali infatuation for English. You have heard every word I said translated fairly accurately in Bengali, your mother tongue. I can't imagine I can drive truth home with greater force, or in clearer words, through the medium of a language which is as foreign to you as it is to me. However, I have to do my work and if I convert a few people to the cult of khaddar or convince, if they are not already convinced, a few of them to the truths of non-violence through the medium of the English language, I should do so. And therefore, if I take up your time just now by speaking in English, it is merely to flatter those who want me to speak in English, so that, perchance, if they have not yet seen the very simple truth that I have been speaking to the masses of India, they might be able to see it.

One of my co-workers said some years ago, writing in connection with the spinning-wheel, that its very simplicity frightened the educated classes. He said, and he said it with great truth in it, that because of its simplicity the educated Indians fail to understand its beauty and grand meaning. Simple as the spinning-wheel is, I am absolutely convinced, after years of continuous, deep and powerful thinking, that there is nothing before India so efficacious for her many ills as the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

The problems of our dear country are so vast, so complex that nothing but a very simple remedy will solve the riddle. The complex character of the education and the training that we have received has confounded our thoughts, paralysed our brains and, unless we have something presented to us in an inexplicable manner, we refuse to see the truth that lies in it.

But if you tax your brains or, better still, if you retire into your private rooms to bend your knee before God and ask Him to guide you, He will guide your hand and put it unerringly on the spinning-wheel. We have spoken, we have delivered speeches, we have written in newspapers, we have published books, we have even made researches. But the age of speaking, the age of writing, the age of delivering oration is gone, never

[1] This paragraph is from a report in *The Hindu*, 13-5-1925. What follows is a report of Gandhiji's speech in English extracted from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 15-5-1925.

to return again. The age of action has commenced. You have to battle not against a race of speakers, but you have to give battle to the race of born workers—a race that has not known what it is to yield, a race that has inflexible determination, a race which is made of some of the finest soldiers in the world. No diplomacy that we can call to our aid will be able to do the task that is before everyone of us. You want mass consciousness, you want co-operation of the masses? You want Councillors to speak with power. At the present moment there is no power in their words—there is no power in their resolutions—not because they don't know how to speak. Deshbandhu has shown how he can outwit the Government in defeating its resolution, defeating its policy. But he can do little unless he has power behind him. You and I, everyone of us, can't go to the Councils. I have said repeatedly I don't believe in Councils. But I have granted, those who believe in Councils should go there. But I want to arm the Councillors with power. I do not want them to become discredited after they have gone there. I want them to be listened to with respect and attention by the Government. How is that to be done? Not by holding mass meetings, not by passing resolutions, not by approving of their policy of resolutions, but by giving some power to them. And you will not, cannot, give them power unless you have evolved it for yourselves, in yourselves. We have not got power. I defy anybody to match the violence of the Government with violence. No matter what may have been [done] in other parts of the world, I am positively certain that we should not attain our freedom by violent means.

I have placed, therefore, a non-violent programme with full knowledge of what I am doing and not because it is a religion, as it is with me, but because it is expedient. It is the only politics for the country. And he who has any political wisdom must come to the conclusion that violent means will serve no earthly purpose. I understand, I appreciate the impatience of those who are burning to deliver the country from the shackles that bind her. I yield to none in my desire to free the country from the shackles. But I consider myself to be a sane man. I regard myself as having a great deal of common sense. I regard myself as a man who has seen something of the world. I am born a fighter from the earliest days of my youth. I am fighting even though it may be with my brothers, friends, wife, children, my co-religionists and, if it is Mussalman, with Mussalmans. But throughout my fight I have understood that one weapon is common to all these fights and that is the weapon of non-violence.

I could not fight my wife with violence, I could not fight my brothers with violence, I refuse to fight the Mussalmans with violence and I dare not fight the Hindus, some of whom are opposing me on the question of untouchability, with violence. I, therefore, deduce from that fund of experience that I cannot fight Englishmen with violence. You have seen in one of my writings that I have converted more Englishmen to love India than any single one of the present generation. I know it is a large claim, it is a proud claim, but it is the claim of the humble man, who has put forth that claim in all humility. I feel, if we are to fight our battle non-violently it will not be by mere words. Non-violence must be expressed in action. Action without intermission, without rest, without recreation, without the slightest pause, with continuous determination—action with the fullest faith in its efficacy is the only remedy for India and the only remedy that I can place in the hands of those little girls and boys, in the hands of the grown-up people, in the hands of poets and philosophers, in the hands of sannyasins, politicians, learned professors and sweepers, in the hands of women and in the hands of robust men. The only universal remedy I can discover today is the spinning-wheel. Multiply the force of this charkha and spin until it is done by 3 hundred millions of men and then tell me what its power will be, tell me then what it will not do. Is there nothing that we can claim to our credit? Throughout all this long, dreary forty years of political life, we have not been able to show to the world one simple action done to perfection and to fulfilment. We have placed before ourselves many programmes. I place before the nation only one programme and ask the nation to fulfil that programme before it can dare think of any other. Is it an impossible programme that you and I should wear nothing but khaddar, although it may be costly? It may be coarse. If it is costly, then tear it into half and do cover your nakedness with half the cloth and it will go to your credit in the book of life. If it is coarse, then, for the sake of India, you will wear coarse cloth. Understand that the slavery of India is coarser than the coarsest khaddar, understand that the pauperism of India is infinitely coarser than the coarsest khaddar that can be produced in Chittagong. If you have heart to think for famishing millions of India, if you have heart to spin, then spin till your hands are paralysed and wear khaddar till you perspire in the coarsest khadi and then you will find that the swaraj of my dream—and of your dream—will break forth in the horizon and then you will dance in joy.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-5-1925

42. *SPEECH TO STUDENTS, CHITTAGONG*

May 13, 1925

Well, then I would say that true national education begins with training in spinning. Just as every boy in England receives naval training and you in Bengal normally know swimming and rowing, so the seven lakh villages in the country should know, for their own protection, spinning as a subsidiary occupation besides agriculture. Even in America, they attach importance to a subsidiary occupation, though the people there have no problem of the joint family and enjoy self-government. In India, no farmer can have enough to live on without some small extra income and he can get it only through spinning. Weaving will not serve the purpose, for it cannot be done only in spare time. I have been to the women's meeting and given them demonstration in spinning. Here is my spinning-wheel in this small bag.[1] You will not think it a particularly good one, but the one which was fine I gave away to Miss Ghosh in Faridpur. She is the head of the education department. She liked it and has written to me saying she will spin and also teach her friends to spin. You can ply it even while you are talking with friends, or relaxing in their company, or thinking about problems in geometry. Shepherds on our side ply it as they walk. They watch their sheep and ply the *takli* at the same time. If you do not understand what I am saying, go and ask Satish Babu. He has joined this movement having given up his chemical works and his income. He will convince you better than I can because his is the brain of a scientist. If you feel that you should perform this daily *yajna* for the sake of your starving countrymen, start it right now.

Now tell me, how many of you are convinced of what I have said.[2]

Well, then, how many of you promise to spin?[3]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

[1] Gandhiji held up his *takli*.

[2] Between 50 and 60 students raised their hands.

[3] About 20 students raised their hands.

43. *SPEECH AT TRADERS' MEETING, CHITTAGONG*

May 13, 1925

My relations with merchants have always been close. I am sure in my mind that it is through merchants that we lost India and it is through them that we shall win it back. India's freedom cannot be secured through the educated classes. We do not know of any instance in the world of a country's freedom having been defended by its educated classes. Those who save a country are the traders and the soldiers. It was not through defeat in battle that India lost its freedom, it was through trade. I tell you, therefore, that when I get the fullest co-operation of merchants in my work, the country will have its freedom for the asking and I urge you to make your full contribution to the public cause of spreading the use of khadi. You should spin for half an hour daily by way of *yajna* and wear pure khadi. One or two of my millionaire friends spin and wear khadi. Why should you not do likewise? You can also help with both money and intelligence. If you want you can do more work than I do. I appeal to you to contribute to this cause with your body, mind and wealth.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 25-5-1925

44. *KHADDAR IN KARNATAK*

I gladly publish the following[1] from Sjt. H. S. Kaujalgi about an experiment that is being made in the district of Bijapur for cheapening khaddar:

This idea of collecting cotton has certainly caught on. Mr. Bharucha reported the other day good collections in East Khandesh in which the Marwaris and the Parsis joined the local people in giving their quota. I would appreciate reports from the other places where similar experiments are being made.

Young India, 14-5-1925

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had written that he along with a few others had collected cotton by begging from door to door. It was woven into cloth and made available to the people at a comparatively low price.

45. *NOTES*

Weavers' Complaint

With reference to the yarn sent by members under the Ahmedabad A.I.C.C. resolution, a worker writes:

> The weavers are complaining that there is no twist to the fine yarn. A large quantity will, therefore, be useless for weaving. The spinners seem more to have cared for the credit of having spun than for the quality of their spinning. I think you did not handle the hanks there. Some of the weavers are even returning the warp after sizing. Their second complaint is regarding the different sizes of hanks. On account of these avoidable defects, the weavers tell me they are not able to weave even one yard per day and thus can hardly earn even two annas a day.

This is a legitimate complaint. I have said in these pages that yarn that cannot be easily woven is not yarn at all, even as bread that cannot be eaten is no bread at all. The complaint is proof of great indifference on the part of the spinning members. Work ill-done is sometimes worse than no work. A lawyer who does not handle his case skilfully steals his client's money. A doctor who carelessly treats his patient steals his patient's money and may even be guilty of man-slaughter. Similarly, a spinner who spins indifferently and sends yarn that is not tested steals merit.

Under swaraj, we shall have the reins of government in our own hands. How will it do if the officials skip over their work, as spinners seem to have skipped over their spinning? Spinning is a simple operation but it is a test of our merit. In that sense, any other such work will no doubt be an equal test. But spinning has been selected as it is the most needed in the country. There can be only one universal test and, in order to be universal, it should be simple, easy to learn, and should occupy the least time of each individual, so as to leave him or her free to devote time and attention to other pursuits, whether public or private. That test is spinning, and if even those who do take it up do their work negligently, indifferently or unskilfully, they will have failed in the easiest practical test imaginable. It may be that people do not like spinning or do not believe in it. Then, the straightest course would be not to spin at all. But to spin without putting one's heart into it is to deceive oneself and the nation.

THE HANDLOOM

The Director of Information has circulated a memorandum on handloom weaving done under the Department of Industries and Commerce. I publish below the salient extracts from the memorandum:[1]

May I point out to the Department that the attempt to introduce the handloom in the homes of agriculturists is foredoomed to failure? A little knowledge of the agricultural life will demonstrate the impracticability of such introduction. Hand-weaving is a long process requiring sustained labour and in itself demanding several processes at which more than one person is required to work at one and the same time. This is not possible in a peasant's cottage. Hence, from times immemorial, hand-weaving has been a separate occupation and an independent and sole means of livelihood. A peasant requires an auxiliary occupation which he can take up or leave at will. Such an occupation for the millions is only hand-spinning. There are, no doubt, other such occupations for utilizing odd moments. But no other than hand-spinning will be found to serve millions of men and women. Hence if the Department of Industries will justify its existence and will think in terms of the millions rather than of individuals and of India rather than of England, then it will devote its attention principally to hand-spinning, organize it among the villagers and make improvements in the various methods of hand-spinning. I am glad to note here that the kindred department in Bengal is turning its attention to hand-spinning though still in a perfunctory manner. This hand-spinning is the one thing in which the Government, if it at all means well, can co-operate with people in making it a success. We have often been told to co-operate with the Government. The proper and natural thing, however, is for the Government to co-operate with the people, anticipate their wants and provide for them. I would also take the liberty of pointing out to the Department that, until they control all the processes cotton has to go through before it is brought to the loom, the latter will act merely as feeder to Manchester, Japan or even Bombay. Whereas the business of the Department is or should be to teach the villager to subject the produce of his field to all the processes in his own home or village, so that he has a variety of occupation and so that he may not feel stranded

[1] Not reproduced here. It gave an account of the progress made in handloom weaving in the preceding 15 years. The Department had opened several schools in the agricultural areas to train people in weaving and dyeing.

and helpless when famine or flood overtakes him and leaves him without crops and without work.

Young India, 14-5-1925

46. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

NOAKHALI,
May 14, 1925

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. We certainly go to Shantiniketan and meet at Burdwan.

I note what you say about Mr. Mcmillan. If a man refrains from untruth for fear of punishment after death, is it any good? Shall we prefer destruction of moral bonds to their existence if they are due to force of public opinion? A friend who advocates birth-control frankly admits that he does not believe in the moral tie and that promiscuous intercourse is an ideal state. I wonder!

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
C/o MR. CHALIHA
JORHAT
ASSAM

From a photostat: G.N. 966

47. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Thursday, Vaishakha Vad 6 [May 14, 1925][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter reached me here today. Do not be sorry if all the property is gone; and what does it matter even if the house is lost? Navibandar is the place where you can go just now because Devdas[2] has gone there. He is hardly likely to stay there long.

[1] Devdas was in Navibandar in 1925. In that year *Vaishakha Vad* 6 fell on May 14.

[2] Devdas Gandhi (1900-57); Gandhiji's youngest son; was associated with Gandhiji in most of his public activities and suffered imprisonment; Editor, *The Hindustan Times*, 1940-57

But it is a quiet place. I have not myself seen it but have heard much about it. I hope you are well. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. VASUMATI DHIMATRAM,
DOULATRAM KASIRAM CO., ETC.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 462. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

48. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Vaishakha Vad 6 [May 14, 1925][1]

CHI. MANI[2],

I was delighted to have your long letter. It is indeed very difficult to work among women. Nevertheless you should patiently do what you can. Dahyabhai must have gone to Mount Abu or to Navibandar. I have not forgotten about the conch-shell bangles you wanted. They are available in Dacca, which I shall be reaching in about three days. Has Father had any opportunity to go for a change?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN
C/O VALLABHBHAI PATEL, BARRISTER
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 22

49. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NOAKHALI[3]

May 14, 1925

Mr. Gandhi replying to the addresses said that he thanked them for the addresses presented to him. He was sorry to hear that Sjt. Satyendra Mitter was not present, but that he was in jail in Mandalay. He hoped that shortly he would come back. Speaking of Hindu-Muslim unity he said his sense of responsibility was double as none of the Ali Brothers was present. They

[1] As in the source
[2] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel
[3] Gandhiji was presented with four addresses at the meeting in the Collectorate compound attended by over 25,000 people, most of them Muslims.

were busy in their own work. He had heard that there was no disunion among them, but now disunion was visible in them. He said that both communities were unwilling to follow his advice. Whenever he found that there was disunion, he thought both were responsible for it. If they were determined to be united, there was no power on earth to separate them and he said that, if they did not clear up their minds, they both would be responsible. So long they had lived in unity and friendship.

Referring to untouchability he said that, so long as it would last, it was impossible for India to advance. Being a *sanatani* Hindu, he said that there was no such thing as untouchability in the Hindu religion. He thanked them for the attempt to uplift the class of untouchables, but he was told that some Brahmins were thwarting them. But he was sure that they would make a determined attempt to abolish untouchability. He hoped that the Noakhali people would do all in their power to remove it altogether. Further, he hoped they would explain this matter to washermen.

Concluding, he said that they were aware that many people had no work for four months in the year and, as a result, they were becoming poorer. All over the world, agriculture was supplemented by some work. And in Hindusthan, there was nothing like the charkha. That is why he called it *Annapurna*. From the fields they would get rice, but through the charkha alone they could improve their condition. He emphasized that the middle-class people should work at least half an hour daily on the charkha wherever they were. If they, for the sake of the poor people, worked on the charkha, there was no greater work. Hence he had been travelling in various places to emphasize on this point. Subsequently, he referred to erosion of Noakhali by river.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-5-1925

50. INTERVIEW TO TEACHERS AT NOAKHALI

May 14, 1925

On the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's visit to Noakhali on the 14th instant, an interview was sought for and granted by him to some representatives of the District Teachers' Association. The deputationists put some searching questions to Mahatmaji regarding the present system of education and asked how, under the existing circumstances, the teachers could render real service to the country. Mahatmaji smilingly began by saying, "Spin and spin still more." He then advised the teachers that they should change the entire moral atmosphere of educational institutions by making impressions upon the minds of boys who are completely under their control by the example of their own character and work. If the teachers, he said, were earnest in their efforts, no amount of Government interference through the agency of the Inspectorate

could thwart their aims and objects, as the teachers were not Government servants. Though the teachers of Bengal, and for the matter that of the whole of India, form a distinct class, yet no united effort at this stage could be expected. But individual earnest workers should bear their part manfully. Concluding, Mahatmaji remarked that he had in the past pointed out the duties and responsibilities of teachers and would do so more emphatically and definitely through the columns of his paper.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-5-1925

51. REPLY TO WOMEN'S ADDRESS, NOAKHALI

May 14, 1925

Who says that woman is dependent on others? The Shastras say nothing of the sort. Sita was Rama's better half and enjoyed empire over his heart. Neither was Damayanti[1] dependent. Who will say, after reading the *Mahabharata*, that Draupadi[2] was dependent on others? Who will call Draupadi dependent, Draupadi who, when the Pandavas failed to protect her, saved herself by an appeal to Lord Krishna? We cherish as sacred the names of seven women as chaste and virtuous wives. Were they dependent? A woman who has the strength to preserve her purity, to defend her virtue—to call such a woman dependent is to murder language and violate dharma.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 31-5-1925

52. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COMILLA[3]

May 15, 1925

Mahatmaji replied suitably saying that the addresses might be presented in Bengali. He would, he said, appreciate it better if, in future, those who wanted to give him addresses would do so either in Bengali or in Hindi. He was told that Comilla proposed to go forward, but found facts not bearing out this statement. He said he was not in the least sorry for being instrumental in introducing the charkha as franchise for the Congress. They admitted the

[1] Wife of King Nala, in the *Mahabharata*
[2] Wife of the five Pandava princes, in the *Mahabharata*
[3] Addresses were presented to Gandhiji, at a public meeting in the morning, by the Municipality, the District Board, the Traders' Association, Ryots' Association and Santisena.

truth that their work should begin in the villages; but let them ask any worker, and he (the worker) would unhesitatingly reply that the charkha was the only remedy—that was the surest way of removing the growing poverty of the masses. Mahatmaji then thanked the people of the locality for living together in perfect harmony and emphasized its absolute necessity for attaining swaraj.

He regretted that Ali Brothers did not accompany him. Maulana Shaukat Ali did not like to leave Bombay before finishing his work there and Maulana Mahomed Ali could not leave Delhi as he was busy with two papers. But he had not come to Comilla to tell new things. In one address there was a tone of despair, but the note of despair was throughout India. He was not sorry for the franchise for the membership of the Congress. He could think of no medicine for India except the charkha. He did not ask the middle-class people to take to charkha for their bread, but they were to be examples to the poor and make a sacrifice for Hindusthan. Besides this, Hindus and Muslims must cleanse their hearts and in this there is happily no difference between the two communities. In conclusion, he dealt with the question of untouchability.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

53. SPEECH TO STUDENTS[1]

COMILLA,
May 15, 1925

Mahatmaji addressed the students in English. He thanked them for the clear exposition of their position and reminded them that the future of India lay upon her youths. He again emphasized the meaning of the ideal of swaraj which was dharma raj as opposed to *adharma* raj. He asked them to observe *brahmacharya* and made them realize the grave responsibilities they had to undertake in the regeneration of the country. He asked them to read books, but that, in his opinion, should occupy only second place, for the primary duty was to form their character without which all learning was of no avail. Mahatmaji stressed upon the fact that the charkha would help them in the formation of their character.

Analysing the reasons of the negligence of the charkha, Mahatmaji assigned it mainly to their failure to appreciate the groaning poverty of the masses. As to the reference that the charkha did not give return for labour, he mildly admonished them and said this habit of calculation ought not to disfigure their

[1] In an address presented to Gandhiji, the students stated that only two per cent of them spun and wore pure khadi. This poor response was due to their lack of faith in the charkha and their indolence.

lives from boyhood. They should, he said, view the matter from a higher point of view and retain faith in the charkha. Let them not see to their own comforts, but let them feel that every yarn spun by them was nearing the solution of India's problems. The remedy lay in their hands and he hoped the students would act up to his programme.

Referring to the Hindu-Muslim problem, he said that those elderly people who wanted Government employment and who wanted to go to the Councils might fight, but the students had no time nor business to do it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

54. REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS[1], COMILLA

May 15, 1925

It will be a mere formality on my part to thank you for this welcome address, for, as you yourselves have admitted, I too have had a share in bringing this Ashram into existence.[2] When I was preparing to visit Bengal, I had a keen desire to meet young men like you and see their work. I know very well the sacrifices which they have made. I know that, until we have many such persons in the country who come forward to make sacrifices, we cannot hope for swaraj. For every young man, renunciation should be his enjoyment. I have never believed that renunciation means suffering, and, if anyone believes that it is so, his renunciation will not endure. Hence, whenever in the course of my tours I come across instances of renunciation and see young men giving up positions of Rs. 500 to Rs. 1000 a month and accepting just a few pice for their livelihood, I do not feel unhappy. On the contrary, I feel that such youths have lost little, having freed themselves from the burden of heavy emoluments.

But I wish to stress one thing, for when we give up a thing for the sake of service, we generally embrace something else in its place. I know that some young men think of self-sacrifice as sufficient in itself. But this is a great error. While giving up something, one should know what other work one must take up. Only then will our life be filled with contentment. We should thus use discrimination in all our activities. According to me, the youths who come forward today to serve the country should have before

[1] Presented by Abhoy Ashram; the speech has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's report.

[2] When Gandhiji was in Bengal in 1920, he had approved the scheme of founding this Ashram.

them only one aim—how to provide work for the idle millions. They will see then that we have no other means of doing so except the spinning-wheel. Hence I regard the medical work and the running of a [medical] school here as unimportant activities.[1] Both these activities have a place only in so far as they can supplement the spinning movement. I was, therefore, glad to learn that in your school, too, spinning and other khadi work is going on. I should advise the workers who run this school to take a vow that, after a fixed date, no boy or girl not wearing khadi would be admitted to this school. The parents should be informed that their children would be obliged to spin and wear khadi. The same rule should be followed in running the dispensary. It would be my wish to see everyone whom I treated here dressed in khadi. There are, of course, many other dispensaries. Running a dispensary is nothing new and that is why young men are able to take up this work. I hope that all persons who have taken a vow of service and renunciation will go in only for those activities which are most difficult, which can be universally adopted and will be most productive of results in our country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

55. TALK TO WORKERS OF VIKRAMPUR

COMILLA,
May 15, 1925

In course of a conversation with some of Vikrampur workers, he [Gandhiji] made his position clear with regard to the proposed abolition of yarn franchise. He said:

The time for retirement from the Congress is not come nor for establishing an All-India Spinning Association. If spinning franchise is abolished, it will be time then to think of a separate organization, but if I am allowed to act up to my programme as an integral body of the Congress, just as the Swarajists are at present, I disfavour the idea of a separate organization. If that is refused to me, I shall have to start a new organization.

As regards complete unity among Hindus and Mussalmans, Mahatmaji said:

[1] This remark was with reference to Dr. Suresh Bannerji's statement that they had planned to set up not only a dispensary but also a medical school.

I don't expect complete unity between Hindus and Mussalmans, I expect workable unity to get swaraj either today or a hundred years after. This workable unity must be established. This unity does not mean extraction of some power from the Government.

As to the meaning of untouchability, Mahatmaji said:

Untouchability is a question of sanitation. If a man is sanitarily clean, I can not only take water from his hands, but allow him to cook my meal; but that is not inter-dining. If a man takes meal from my plate, I call that inter-dining. I don't even allow my wife to share my food from my plate. As a Hindu wife, she often wishes to do it. But, as I don't always swallow everything of Hinduism, I decline to do this.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

56. *INTERVIEW WITH A FRIEND*

[After *May 15, 1925*]

We are repeating our past mistakes, Mahatmaji, he said, in 1905-1908 we built a house of cards which broke down no sooner than it was put up and we are in for the same thing now.

You compare the earlier swadeshi agitation with the present? You forget that we have no fireworks now, but only quiet work.

I know it, sir, but there is no organization.

Pardon me, you are ignorant of the state of things. Do you know that we have the best organizations in Bengal, Tamilnad and Gujarat for example? You think institutions like the Khadi Pratishthan and Abhoy Ashram, Comilla, are going to die?

But how will they go on? We are living on subsistence allowance and asking our young men to do with less. How long can it go on?

How long? Why, our whole history is replete with it. You think our young men have no grit? They have gone to their work with eyes open and they are not going to give it up, whatever happens. The Abhoy Ashram, which I saw a few days ago, is situated on a beautiful spot; they have got clean nice little huts, a beautiful tank and a plot of land. They cook their own food, do their own scavenging and make both ends meet from the proceeds of a hospital. Dr. Suresh is no child, he knows his business and

he will see that his khaddar work goes on increasing every day, whatever happens to him and his co-workers. And Khadi Pratishthan, whose rates are very high you say, have at the present moment more orders than they can cope with. Look at Satish Babu's work. Have you ever been to the flood areas? From flood relief they have embarked upon permanent relief work. And I may tell you that Khadi Pratishthan does not believe in subsistence allowance. It pays its workers their market wages.

Well sir, it is your visit that has created a boom.

It does not matter. You may call it a blister. It will fall back to its normal state which is quite satisfactory. And go to a yarn *hat*[1]. Where only a few maunds of yarn was being sold, hundreds of maunds are being sold today. There are hundreds of families supplementing, if not earning, their livelihood from their charkha. It is a sight to see how the workers are besieged by people asking for cotton to spin, on the market days. 'And if these workers retired from their field, what would happen?,' you may ask. But they cannot retire. They did not give up their fine careers for nothing. The Abhoy Ashram men have got three strings to their bow, a hospital from which they find the wherewithals and which Suresh Babu thinks of supplementing by a medical school—and he has got enough medical talents—and besides the khadi work which is the main thing, they are running a big boys' school, hoping to have greater hold on the people through the boys. Then there are Pravartak Sangh workers. I do not know their work, but I know they are as many as 200 and they are working against tremendous odds.

"But there are only three such institutions," said the questioner still unsatisfied.

By no means. There are many more working away in their humble way, and if they were only three, what then? There are men like Jamnalalji[2], Rajagopalachari[3], Shankerlal Banker, giving all their twenty-four hours to the work, working with devotion and dogged pertinacity. They are working with patience to wait for a century if necessary and working with the desire to succeed tomorrow. And you do not know how the swadeshi movement of

[1] Weekly market

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); merchant, social worker and philanthropist; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years and a close associate of Gandhiji

[3] C. Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

1905-8 differs from the present. It was a movement magnificent in conception. But it had no knowledge or organization behind it. It made the boycott of British cloth a shibboleth, and relied on the broken reeds of the mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad. Today you are guarding against all the disasters that attended the earlier enterprise. Today you bid fair to show that, if all the mills in India were burnt down, you can clothe the whole of India by cloth produced by your cottage spinners and weavers.

Let us not be too sure. You know of people who in those days had to hang themselves for want of cloth.

You are talking of the days of Noah, my friend. Weavers were then deluded into the belief that they could not weave except with machine-spun or foreign yarn. Today I am asking the whole organization to be taken into intelligent hands. No movement can be made universal unless it can be propagated entirely without foreign agency. But I ask you to study things; study the prices of khaddar in the beginning of the movement and today; study the quality of it; study the yarn we are producing; in short, study the evolution of the charkha and khaddar, and then say what you have to say.

Can't we depend on the growth of our mill-industry?

I have often shown in pages of *Young India* the fallacy of those who argue in favour of the mills and shall not labour the point today. I do not want to depend on mills, I want the mills to depend on me. That is the long and short of it.

We can have national mills.

Well, he who suggests a proposition must work it out himself.

I do not know whether he went away convinced, but he apologized for having tired Gandhiji who assured him that no one could tire him out on the charkha.

Young India, 2-7-1925

57. *TALK TO A MUSLIM FRIEND*

[After *May 15, 1925*]

A Mussalman friend came with a long catalogue of grievances. First was untouchability against them observed by the Hindus; second, differences about cow-slaughters; third, insufficient representation; fourth, books and pamphlets against Islam; fifth, newspaper reports about abductions and such other alleged crimes by Mussalmans; sixth, exclusion from services; seventh, exactions by *mahajans*; eighth, *abvabs* by zamindars for Kalipuja. Gandhiji showed him that some of the grievances were purely local, some were against particular individuals and some reciprocal; the real grievance was the first. And he immediately agreed that that was the principal grievance and others arose out of it. "They do not even sell sweetmeats to us, Gandhiji," said he.

Yes, I see it. That is a genuine grievance; but you should not, as you did in the beginning, magnify everything into a grievance suffered by Mussalmans as a community. I tell the Hindus that, if they want to protect Hinduism by an elaborate law of pollution, then it had better perish. You cannot convert India into a *Jazirat-ul-Arab*. Hindus have, in the days gone by, absorbed all sorts of nationalities. I am sure we shall have to revise our code of pollution and remove the unnecessary barriers that strangle Hinduism rather than strengthen it. We were never exclusive, we were inclusive. Its beauty is that it has never been a missionary religion like Islam or Christianity ever counting heads. It has carried on absorption unconsciously, following a sort of natural accretion. "Why", I ask my Hindu friends, "why do we at this time of the day prevent sweetmeat sellers from selling sweets to Mussalmans when we have no objection to getting chocolates from a European confectioner?"

Young India, 2-7-1925

58. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, COMILLA[1]

May 16, 1925

Mahatmaji said in his reply to the address that he felt pleasure in receiving their address and should feel more pleasure when all the sisters would be spinning and wearing khaddar. Mahatma desired them to follow the ideal of Sita, which was an ideal of absolute purity. Cloth made of yarn spun on charkha was then in use and there was no poverty then in the land. Foreign cloth was impure and not to be worn on their pure body. He expected the ladies to take a vow not to wear foreign cloth. Mahatmaji appealed for the removal of the blot of untouchability and said those who showed contempt to fellow human beings on the alleged sanction of religion committed an impious and irreligious act. Ramachandra became purer by embracing Guha, a *Chandal*[2].

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

59. POWER OF "RAMANAMA[3]"

A correspondent asks the following question:[4]

I do not know the writer. The fact that he had the letter delivered to me through his brother when I was leaving Bombay shows the strength of his curiosity in this matter. Ordinarily, such questions should not be discussed in public. It is evident that, if it became the general practice with the public to probe into the private life of an individual, most unpleasant results would follow. But I cannot escape being the object of such curiosity, whether it is worthy or unworthy. I have no right to try to escape. Neither do I wish to do so. My private life has become public life. For my part there is not a single thing in the world which I would conceal from others. My experiments are spiritual. Some of them are novel. They depend very much on self-examination on my part. I have carried them out, following the maxim: "As

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address to which he replied in Hindi.

[2] Member of a community treated as untouchable

[3] Repitition of the holy name of Rama

[4] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had mentioned Gandhiji's statement in a speech that he had thrice been saved from sin by *Ramanama*. Pointing out that a local paper, *Saurashtra*, had commented on this statement and drawn inferences which were not clear, he had asked Gandhiji himself to explain what he had meant.

in one's body, so in the universe". The underlying assumption is that what is possible to me must be so to all others. Hence I have to answer some questions about private matters too.

Moreover, I cannot resist the opportunity I have got, in answering this question, of explaining the power of *Ramanama*.

I should, however, like to request this correspondent and others who may put questions to me in future that, if they base their questions on newspaper reports, they should send me copies of the papers in question. I have often stated that I do not read newspapers for the simple reason that I am not able to do so. I do not know what *Saurashtra* has written. It is difficult to take notes of my speeches. Mahadevbhai does so, but I do not always, approve the notes he takes. The reason is that when subtle or new ideas are being expressed, an error in reporting even one word may misrepresent the speaker's meaning. Hence, when reporters who are not familiar with my ideas take notes of my speeches, they can never be relied upon, and I have often asked readers not to depend on such reports. When they have a doubt about anything, they may ask me and, while doing so, they should also send me a copy of the newspaper in which they have read reports of my speeches.

With these prefatory remarks, even though I do not know what *Saurashtra* has said on the matter, I shall describe how I was saved on those three occasions by the grace of God. All the three occasions concern public women. I was taken to two of them by friends on different occasions.

On the first occasion, I went to the place[1] out of false regard for the friend and, if God had not saved me, I would certainly have fallen. This time the woman whose house I had entered herself threw me out with contempt. I simply did not know what to say or how to behave in such a situation. Prior to this incident, I always regarded it as shameful even to sit near a public woman, so that I was trembling even when entering that house. After going in, I could not even look at her face and I do not know what her face was like. What could that smart woman do to such a fool but turn him out? She said a few angry words to me and asked me to go away. At that time, of course, I did not realize that God had saved me. I left feeling miserable. I felt crestfallen and even unhappy about my stupidity! I felt that I lacked

[1] In Rajkot, when Gandhiji was a high school student; *vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. VII.

manliness. It was later I realized that I had been shielded by my stupidity. God had saved me by making me behave like a fool. Else how could I, who had entered a house of ill-fame with evil intention, have been saved?

The second occasion was more dreadful than the first one. I was not so innocent then as I was at the time of the first incident, though I was of course more vigilant. Moreover, I had the protection of a vow administered to me by my revered mother.[1] But this time the place was in England. I was in the very flush of youth. Two of us friends were lodged in one house. We had gone there only for a few days.[2] The landlady was as good as a prostitute. Two or three of us sat down to play cards with her. In those days I used to play cards on occasion. In England, a mother and a son can, and do, play cards for innocent amusement. On this occasion too, we sat down to play, following the usual custom. The beginning was completely innocent. I, of course, did not know that the landlady lived on her body. But as the play warmed up, the atmosphere changed. The woman started making gestures. I was observing my friend. He had abandoned all restraints. I felt tempted. I was flushed in the face, for lust had entered me and I had become impatient.

But who can harm him whom Rama protects? To be sure, His name was not on my lips at that hour, but He ruled my heart. On my lips was the language of lust. My good friend noticed my behaviour. We knew each other very well. He had seen me in difficult situations in which I had, with an effort of will, kept my purity. But he saw that on this occasion evil had entered my mind and that, if the night progressed while I was in that mood, I too would fall like him.

It was this friend who first made me realize that even immoral men have good instincts. He felt unhappy to see me in that plight. I was younger than he. Rama came to my help through his person. He aimed arrows of love at me: "Moniya!" (This is an affectionate form of "Mohandas". I remember that I used to be called by that name by my mother, my father and the eldest cousin in our family. The fourth person to call me so was this friend who, through his goodness, proved a brother to me.) "Moniya, be careful. You know that I have fallen. But I shall

[1] Gandhiji's mother was unwilling to send him to England, but when he vowed not to touch meat, wine and woman, she gave her consent; *vide An Autobiography* Pt. I, Ch. XI.

[2] In connection with the Vegetarian Conference at Portsmouth; *vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XXI.

not let you fall. Recall the promise you have made to your mother. This thing is not for you. Be off from here. Go to bed. Are you gone? Throw off the cards."

I do not remember whether I replied to him. I put down the cards. For a moment I felt unhappy. I felt ashamed and my heart began to beat fast. I got up and went to bed.

I woke up. I started repeating the name of Rama. "How miraculously I have been saved, how He has saved me! All honour to my promise! All glory to my mother! All glory to my friend! All glory to Rama!"—I kept saying to myself. For me this was indeed a miracle. If my friend had not shot at me the invincible arrows of Rama, where would I have been today?

> He on whom Rama's arrows have lighted—
> he knows what they are.
> He on whom love's arrows have lighted—
> he knows what they are.

For me, this was an occasion when I first became aware of the existence of God.

If today the whole of world told me that there is no God, no Rama, I would say it lied. If I had fallen on that terrible night, I would not today be waging battles of satyagraha, would not be washing away the filth of untouchability, would not be repeating the holy name of the spinning-wheel, would not regard myself fit to be blessed by the *darshan* of millions of women, and would not be surrounded by hundreds of thousands of them who sit near me without fear as they sit around a child. I would always be running away from them, and they would have quite justifiably kept themselves at a distance from me. I look upon this occasion as the most perilous in my life. Seeking pleasure I learnt self-restraint. On the path to forsake Rama's name, I had his *darshan*. A miracle indeed.

> Oh scion of Raghu's race, protect my honour,
> I am a fallen man, old in my evil ways;
> Take my boat safely to the other shore.

The third incident[1] is amusing. During one of my journeys, I came into fairly close contact with the ship's captain, as also with an English passenger. In every port where the ship weighed anchor, the captain and some passengers would go and search for brothels. The captain once invited me to go with him and see the port. I did not know what that meant. We went and stood

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. VI.

before a prostitute's house. Then I knew what was meant by going to see a port. Three women were produced before us. I was completely taken aback, but felt too embarrassed to say anything. Nor could I run away. I had of course no wish to indulge in this immoral pleasure. Those two went into the rooms. The third woman led me into her own room. While I was still thinking what I should do, the other two came out of the rooms. I do not know what that woman must have thought about me. She stood smiling before me, but that did not have the slightest effect on me. Since we spoke different languages, there was no question of my talking to her. Those friends shouted for me and so I went out. I certainly felt a little humiliated. They had seen that I was a fool in these matters. They even joked between themselves on this point. They pitied me, of course. From that day, I was enrolled among the fools of the world, as far as the captain was concerned. He never invited me again to see a port. If I had remained in the room longer or if I had known that woman's language, I do not know what would have been my plight. But I certainly realized that day, too, I was not saved by my own power, but that it was God who had protected me by having made me stupid in such matters.

I remembered only these three incidents at the time of the speech in question. The reader should not think that I have not been through more of similar experiences. But I certainly wish to state that every time I escaped, thanks to *Ramanama*. God gives strength only to the weak who approach Him in utter helplessness.

> So long as the elephant trusted to his own strength,
> so long his efforts availed him not.
> Let the weak appeal to Rama's strength,
> He will come to help before the name is uttered in full.

What, then, does this *Ramanama* mean? Is it something to be repeated parrot-like? Certainly not. If that were so, all of us would win deliverance by repeating it mechanically. *Ramanama* ought to be repeated from the depth of one's heart; it would not then matter if the words are not pronounced correctly. The broken words which proceed from the heart are acceptable in God's court. Even though the heart cries out "*Mara, mara*"[1], this appeal of the heart will be recorded in one's credit column. On the contrary, though the tongue may pronounce the name of Rama cor-

[1] *Rama* pronounced wrongly, that is, in the reverse, and then meaning "*dying, dying*"

rectly, if the lord of that heart is Ravana, the correct repetition of Rama's name will be recorded in one's debit column.

Tulsidas did not sing the glory of *Ramanama* for the benefit of the hypocrite who "has Rama's name on his lips and a knife under his arm". His wise calculations will go wrong, while the seeming errors of the man who has installed Rama in his heart will succeed. Rama alone can repair one's fortunes and so the poet Surdas[1], lover of God, sings:

> Who will repair my fortunes?
> O who else but Rama?
> Everyone is a friend of his on whom good fortune smiles,
> None of his whom fortune has forsaken.

The reader, therefore, should understand clearly that *Ramanama* is a matter of the heart. Where speech and the mind are not in harmony with each other, mere speech is falsehood, no more than pretence or play of words. Such chanting may well deceive the world, but can Rama who dwells in man's heart be deceived? Hanuman[2] broke open the beads in the necklace which Sita gave him as a gift, wanting to see whether they were inscribed with Rama's name. Some courtiers who thought themselves wise asked him why he showed disrespect to Sita's necklace. Hanuman's reply was that, if the beads were not inscribed with Rama's name inside, then every necklace given to him by Sita was a burden to him. The wise courtiers thereupon smilingly asked him if Rama's name was inscribed in his heart. Hanuman drew out his knife and, cutting open his chest, said: "Now look inside. Tell me if you see anything else there except Rama's name." The courtiers felt ashamed. Flowers rained on Hanuman from the sky, and from that day Hanuman's name is always invoked when Rama's story is recited.

This may be only a legend or a dramatist's invention. Its moral is valid for all time: only that which is in one's heart is true.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 17-5-1925

[1] A medieval Hindi poet
[2] The Vanara-hero in the *Ramayana*; humble and devoted servant of Rama

60. SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA

Who has not heard of Sir Surendranath Banerjea? There was a time when he was known as the lion of Bengal, and was one of the pillars of the Congress. Young Bengal used to worship him. Thousands of youths eagerly waited for an opportunity to listen to his roar. When Surendranath stood up and spoke, the people never felt tired of listening to his speech. At the time of the Congress session in Poona in 1895, Sir Surendranath was its President. His speech ran into an eighty-page booklet of octavo size. He had written out the speech, but he delivered the whole of it without reference to the text and the speech did not differ from the printed text even in one word. He had referred to a sheet of paper only to read out certain figures. It took him three hours to deliver his speech, and it is said that the people listened attentively to his speech lasting so many hours.

Now times have changed. Today the people will not give even one hour to the best of speakers. The love of oratorical speeches has almost vanished.

But a wonderful memory and powerful oratory were not Sir Surendra's only qualities. He has fought many battles against the Government. He also went to jail. He has been a teacher of a high calibre. His services were of great value. It is our fault that we underrate them today. No one else could have done in those days what he did. It is ingratitude to forget the virtues of a man of a past age simply because times have changed. The services of such a person should be measured only by the standards of his age. If we apply today's standards to him, we shall be doing injustice both to him and to us. We do injustice to ourselves because, if we forget our legacy of the past, that would be so much loss to us. There is little in common between his views and mine, and yet my respect for him is the same today as it was then. I can never forget the services he rendered to the country. When, therefore, I heard the news of his illness I went[1] to his villa to inquire after him. I had never seen it before. He lives in a quiet suburb of Calcutta named Barrackpore. His villa stands on an extensive plot of land in the middle of a beautiful park, with the Ganga flowing in front of it. As it is in a secluded spot, great quiet reigns there.

[1] On May 6, 1925; Banerjea died on August 6, 1925.

I thought I would see him lying in bed, but he was sitting in his writing chair in front of his table laden with books. On seeing me, he rose from his seat and embraced me very lovingly. His body had certainly become emaciated but he stood erect. There was no weakness in his voice. He is 77 years of age and yet he discussed every matter with lively interest like a 17-year-old youth. When I praised his power of memory, he said: "Even today my memory is as good as it was. So well do I remember things of the days when I was just a child five years old that I can describe those events just as they happened." Only recently he has published his reminiscences. It took him nine years to write them; he showed me the exercise books in which he had recorded the incidents. The matter covers five or six books of foolscap size. His handwriting is so clear and uniform that I was moved to admiration. Nowhere did I notice evidence of the hand shaking.

I asked him what he read these days. He replied with a smile: "Shall I tell you? I am going through my reminiscences for the purpose of a second edition. I want to make some changes and additions. I have been told by the booksellers that all the copies will be exhausted by the end of the year. I am, therefore, getting ready [for a second edition]."

The conversation turning to the subject of his physical condition, he said: "I shall live to be 91. I still have so much energy that it doesn't seem too long a period."

Bharat Bhushan Malaviyaji has fixed a hundred years for himself. I, therefore, asked him why he did not fix the same period for himself. He replied: "I don't think I shall be able to work that long, and I don't wish to live on after I have become too weak."

He believes that the secret of his long life is his regularity of routine, from which he never departed, and his habit of working systematically. I had heard the story, and he confirmed it, that in the course of his busy life he never missed his fixed train every night by which he returned to Barrackpore. He says: "I attached as much importance to regular rest as to tireless work in public service. Hence I regard failure to take a night's rest as a sin of failing in the duty of service."

From Palace to Hut

Wherever I go, the poor are always with me. They seek me out wherever I may be. No one had been informed about my trip to Barrackpore. I did not know that there were labourers living

round about. But a little after I reached Sir Surendranath's villa, about a hundred or two poor people of the neighbourhood flocked to his park. Within a minute, they came to know of my visit, God knows how. Ordinarily, they would be afraid or would hesitate even to enter in this manner the villa of a great man. But believing that they have a right to enter where I go, they come in unafraid, and no one stops them. Among those poor people, there were one or two Biharis. They used to work as teachers in the labour area. Barrackpore is situated on an elevation. There is a lake there. Water from the Ganga is drawn here and then filtered and purified. Hundreds of labourers have been engaged on this work. These labourers hail from Bihar and from the part of United Provinces[1] bordering on Bihar. One of the Bihari teachers invited me to his house and expressed a desire to show me the yarn spun by him and the khadi store which he ran. He works on six spinning-wheels and, ordering khadi from Bihar, sells it to the labourers. How could I slight or decline this invitation? We went there. The labourers came and surrounded us. To be sure, there were spinning-wheels in that tiny house. On our side, khadi worth three or four hundred rupees was attractively arranged on a bench.

He said, "My brother, some of my friends and I work on these spinning-wheels. We get slivers from Calcutta. We sell this khadi to the labourers without charging any profit. Four or five of us wear khadi exclusively. As money is needed to carry on this work, the labourers give me one pice for every rupee of their wage. I take nothing for myself out of what they give. It only helps in meeting the extra expense incurred on khadi." I asked him why they did not order khadi from Bengal. He replied: "Because we must help dispose of khadi produced in Bihar. We should give what help we can from here." In this way, these youths sell khadi worth Rs. 2,500 annually to the poor labourers. Who can say how many such poor, selfless youths there are who silently help in spreading the use of khadi without expecting or desiring publicity? Sir Surendranath could not help expressing approval of the khadi and spinning movement. Before we left the hut of this poor youth, he showed us the book in which in very clear hand, he had written the accounts relating to his khadi work.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 17-5-1925

[1] Now known as Uttar Pradesh

61. MY NOTES

Simplicity v. Disorder

Discussing difficulties which deter people from taking up public work, a young man writes:[1]

It is not at all easy to say how far the difficulties pointed out here deter the educated class. My own belief is that the difficulties will not deter a sincere worker. Those who have been taking tea continue to do so and at the same time devote themselves to service. Many workers travel second class and yet do real service. There is no sin in drinking tea or travelling second class. Those who can do without tea or the comforts of the second class should do so, but those who cannot endure the physical discomforts of the third class may travel second class and serve. This is plain enough. Those who adopt untidy and slovenly ways in the name of simplicity certainly commit a sin. Simplicity is incompatible with slovenliness because simplicity is a virtue while disregard for order is a defect. One finds even those who live in style wanting in a sense of order. An unmethodical person cannot be regarded as simple. Simplicity can be acquired by training. A person who cannot have furniture and therefore manages without it is not a man of simple habits. He wants more of it and is miserable because he has to make do with a little. A man of simple habits is contented with a little even when he can get much and regards plenty as a source of misery.

What is true of lack of order and method is also true of uncleanliness. A person who loves simplicity will never be unclean. We know, however, that many people of seemingly simple habits are very dirty and bring discredit to simplicity. It is the duty of those who wear khadi to keep it always clean and as white as milk, to wash it daily and to mend the garment if it is torn in any part. One need not be ashamed of patches on one's clothes, but torn clothes are a sign of indolence and therefore something to be ashamed of. There ought to be cleanliness in simplicity. In trying to maintain cleanliness in the midst of plenty, one is driven to burden oneself with more and more possessions; that is why some people cultivate simple habits. Anyone who adopts

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji's advice to the people to be simple in their food and living habits had been misinterpreted by many to mean disregard for order and regularity.

such habits should, therefore, understand that he must avoid slovenliness and uncleanliness.

A little leisure is certainly necessary to cultivate these qualities. If shop assistants have to be in their shops right from morning to night, they cannot even think of correcting bad habits such as lack of cleanliness. They carry on observing as much cleanliness as custom requires. They do not cultivate simplicity for its own sake. Being helpless they may make a show of being saints. If they have any scope for earning money, they would probably make a great deal of it. Nevertheless, it is necessary to reduce the working hours for such people. It is quite possible that some of them will misuse their leisure, but there is no doubt that the risk must be taken. The remedy lies mainly in the hands of the assistants themselves. If they are keen enough to reform themselves, they will find their own way in the matter. If the proprietors have sympathy for them or if they understand their own real interests, they too can introduce the needed reform on their own.

To Spinners

I have frequently stated that spinning does not mean merely drawing out a thread. Just as a *rotla*[1] made somehow from any sort of flour and cooked on any wretched stove is not *rotla* and may cause indigestion if eaten, so too if we draw out a thread from cotton of any sort carded anyhow, it will not be yarn. That alone is yarn which can be easily woven into cloth. In this respect our standard is mill-yarn. Till our yarn is as good as mill-yarn, the deficiency will be counted as our failure. It is a matter of experience that not only can we equal it but can also excel it. Good hand-spun yarn is always superior to good mill-yarn. The softness to be found in cloth woven from the former is never to be found in mill-cloth. So long as we have not reached that level, there are bound to be complaints against khadi. Not only that, but it will also be difficult to get every weaver to weave only khadi. I had to make these observations because of a letter which the All-India Khadi Board has recently received from a worker. Before spinning was introduced as a qualification for the franchise, members of the Working Committee had to send their yarn to the All-India Khadi Board. The experiences gained in getting that yarn woven should be regarded as valuable. One of these is the report I have mentioned above. The worker has pointed out in

[1] Thick, round cake of unleavened bread

it that sometimes the yarn is too weak for weaving. Moreover, the yarn had been wound on winding-frames of different sizes according to the whim of each spinner, so that the weavers had to spend a great deal of their time in making hanks of standard size. Both these difficulties should be eliminated. The members of the Working Committee could easily have paid attention to this point, but they do not seem to have done so. The result may be that either we shall have to stop using such yarn for weaving khadi from it, or else to use it for some unimportant purpose.

Let That Be

As spinning has been introduced as a qualification for the franchise, the number of spinners is bound to increase. Everyone who spins should, therefore, ponder further on the experience reported above. He should bear two things in mind:

1. He should spin well-twisted and uniform yarn.
2. Yarn should be wound round a four-foot winding-frame and every 100 yards should be made into a hank.

Yarn which does not satisfy these two conditions does not deserve the name. A more careful spinner will understand the quality of cotton, card it or get it carded properly and produce yarn of the highest count he can and every time, before removing the yarn, blow water over it. Anyone who does this will have done full justice to himself and to the country. He will have got out of cotton as much as is possible. Such a person understands the economics of khadi. If we can, on the whole, produce yarn of 20 counts, the price of khadi can be much reduced and there will be no more complaints from women.

If the voters understand their duty well, we should get the best yarn at the price of cotton. If we can do this, all the difficulties experienced in regard to khadi will automatically disappear. The voters' honest labour is a protection, a source of support to khadi and royal patronage of it.

Will the voters—men and women spinners—respond to this request?

Famine Relief

We have received the following report from the Punjab about the help which the spinning-wheel can render during famine:[1]

I have taken this from the report received by the All-India Khadi Board. What is to be noted about it is that whereas for-

[1] The report is not translated here.

merly foodgrain was distributed to people, now they are paid for work done by them. We also see from the report that in making people work, one has to learn the work oneself. If the organizers were particular about the quality of yarn, the same price would not be paid to all irrespective of the quality of yarn, and the Relief Organization would be saved the needless expense it is being put to and no injustice would be done to the poor as at present. We observe, moreover, that in such work correct accounts ought to be maintained, but that this is not being done. It does not seem that this is due to dishonesty. It seems, rather, to be due to lack of efficiency and to the negligence of the organizing department. If the work is done in a clean manner, the people engaged in it being paid a little more if necessary, such undertakings are sure to become self-supporting in most cases.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1925

62. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, Vaishakha Vad 10 [*May 17, 1925*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am not at all worried about you and hence do not write to you, knowing that you get all the news about me. I liked your going to Navibandar. The others also will have a change to a cool place. Millions have to bear equally the heat and the cold. We have not reached that stage. I wish we had; but how can we change the mould in which we are cast?

I am quite happy. Satish Babu's arrangements leave nothing to be desired. Kristodas[2] had temperature for a day. Blessings to all the boys and girls.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. DEVDAS GANDHI
C/o CHI. MANEKLAL A. GANDHI
NAVIBANDAR *via* PORBANDAR
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2046

[1] The postmark bears the date 18-5-1925; *Vaishakha Vad* 10 fell on May 17.

[2] Krishnadas

63. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DACCA[1]

May 17, 1925

FRIENDS,

I am making a departure from my ordinary rule of giving a reply to the addresses in Hindustani.[2] I am breaking that rule mostly as a compliment to the reader of the District Board address who, with exactness, recited the address instead of reading it. It reminds me of Sir Surendranath Banerjea when he was not Knighted. I was only a stripling then but those who were present, when he recited his address at Poona, told me that, without misplacing a single adjective, he recited the whole of the address which covered nearly 80 octavo pages. It reminds me also of Babu Ambika Charan Mazumdar to whose address I had the pleasure of listening at Lucknow. He began to recite his address and went through a page and half without a single mistake and probably, but for a hint from our friends, Lucknow would not have been able to stand, or to ask him to read, an address which covered about 30 foolscap pages.

I don't know who else read the remaining portion of the address. When I came to Bengal, I had occasion to witness these things mostly in connection with the addresses presented to me.

I must not steal from you or me the most impassioned grief and intense longing. I had to listen to the exquisite music of the Bengali language when I came to Bengal. Spare me from our English diction and elocution, no matter how lofty it might be. Give in unadulterated Bengali, when you cannot and may not give in Hindustani. All that Bengal wishes to tell is a message to all India. I think it is high time to conduct our proceedings, specially proceedings of this character, in the vernacular of the provinces or in Hindustani. A time will come when we shall all feel ashamed to use this tongue (English). I think I have taken time on a matter over which I have already expressed my opinion. I am obliged to thank you sincerely for the sentiment expressed in your addresses. I don't thank you for the exquisite caskets in which you have put your addresses. I possess nothing nor have

[1] Gandhiji was presented addresses by the District Board, the Municipality and the People's Association, at the meeting held in the Northbrook Hall.

[2] This sentence is based on a report in *The Hindu*, 18-5-1925.

I any use for all these, but for the pieces of paper, which are more a thing of the heart and which come from a corner of your heart. You talk of the departed glory of Dacca. It is specially real. As I walk and as I roam from place to place, I find illimitable possibilities for returning to old Bengal. Once more, let Bengal export not all her raw produces, jute, rice or cotton, but let Bengal export the finest fabrics, let Bengal revive her great art for which she was famous. Depend upon it that not until you tackle the problem of hand-spinning, the problem of the revival of the finest art will be impossible. I have been accused of one thing—of the inartisticness to realize the artistic beauty for which India stands, and my heart weeps for the fact that that beauty has departed. We want our own fabric. Until we spin our own yarn, we shall not be able to revive that fabric of ours. If you import 'muslins' from Paris or Japan, I know to my cost or to your cost, if you import the finest yarn from Paris or Japan, as I saw when I was in Dacca, you cannot and you will never be able to revive the art. What will you do for the dumb millions of Bengal? What will you do for the sisters of yours who are pining away behind the *purdah*. I visited a village in Comilla and a representative of the sisters of ours—who have not a place in the District Board to send their representatives—insisted on giving cotton and receiving in exchange the yarn from them. If you send your representative there to buy yarn, it may be one rupee, two rupees or three rupees and buy yarn for the supply of their bread, what a service you will do for them! Do you think that your District Board and People's Association can help them?

I have just now come from the meeting of the untouchables, the *Bhangis*. The *Bhangis* are keeping your town clean and their services are indispensable. They told me that they had 80 children to teach, but there is no school to teach them. I asked them whether they would want a school to educate their boys. One of them in reply said, "We have asked for a school in our address presented to you."

Speaking on khaddar Mahatmaji said:

If you and the middle-class people give at least half an hour only for spinning, I could swamp Dacca with khaddar. I can compete with Japan, Manchester and any town. The people want to wear khaddar. Be sure that they will wear khaddar. Khaddar shall be sufficient to clothe the whole of Dacca if you can make up your minds. You can do just the very simple thing,

that is, to revive the past glory of Dacca in a much more glorious manner. I don't think I will keep you for many minutes.

Coming to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity you have touched upon, it grieves me that I have not here with me one of the two brothers, Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, to listen to the testimony—the warm testimony—that comes from your hearts.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-5-1925

64. *TALK TO STUDENTS AT DACCA*[1]

May 17, 1925

At Dacca the students' meeting was cancelled, but Gandhiji asked the students to come and have a chat after all the public functions were over, and they had more than they could even in their wildest dreams have expected. Gandhiji, always at his best when provoked, unbosomed himself when a friend objected that spinning was a waste of energy and time, and another that his advice took no count of the principle of division of labour.

Do I ask you to do spinning for the whole of the day? Do I ask you to take it up as a substantive occupation? Where, then, is the breach of the principle of division of labour? Do you have a division of labour in eating and drinking? Just as everyone of us must eat and drink and clothe himself, even so, everyone of us must spin himself. And it is a waste, you say? Fellow-feeling for your countrymen, you say, you have in an abundant measure? And what is that fellow-feeling without the milk of human kindness? Do you feel anything like the love that a cow feels for her calf or a mother for her baby? The cow's udders and the mother's breast overflow with milk at the sight of their young ones. Do your hearts overflow with love at the sight of your famished countrymen? By spinning, my friends, you demonstrate your love for them. You spin and you make them shake off their idleness. A friend goes and beautifully sings before a crowd and affects their hearts. Is it a waste of effort? It would be, of course, if he vainly howls *Vande Mataram* before them. But spinning means more. It has a purpose and it means added production. The purpose is that it serves as a bond with the masses. And the mechanical effort has something as its result, whilst there is absolutely nothing like it which all alike can do without much

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

effort and skill, nothing which can be done by millions—by the best of us as by the mediocre. And the students should all do it particularly because they are the salt of the earth. Their life is yet to begin, they can imbibe new ideas as no one else can, and they have long years of service before them. You can put new wine into new bottles and not into old. And imagine what a disciplined band of students with fire, energy and reason can do. Imagine what a mighty thing it would be, the product of a half-hour's labour given to hand-spinning by every one of the 11,000 students of Dacca! And do you know that if you all wear khadi the spinners get a major part of the money you spend? You will perhaps think of England with her elaborate machinery. But she lives on the exploitation of other nations. She has conquered our labour. It is an economic drain which is even more disastrous than the Home Charges and other drains that Dadabhai Naoroji[1] opened our eyes to. Even he could not see this insidious drain, but I, being his disciple working along his lines, have discovered this subtle drain and say that the economic drain involved in our being made a nation of idlers is the most ruinous of all.

And so on and so forth, until he brought them face to face with the havoc this enforced idleness has wrought on the fair face of the land—the famishing of Jagannath Puri and the impoverished of Bihar and the women in other parts to whom an anna per day is a coveted godsend. There is nothing which I have heard from him for many a long day which can exceed this talk in melting pathos and incisive appeal.

Young India, 28-5-1925

65. SPEECH AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, SHYAMPUR[2]

May 17, 1925

He said that he could confer benediction on boys on the foundation stone of the hospital with pleasure, but he said he had little faith in *kavirajas*

[1] 1825-1917; pioneer Indian statesman known as the "Grand Old Man of India"; President, Indian National Congress, 1886, 1893 and 1906; first enunciated swaraj as the objective of the Congress; was elected member of the House of Commons, 1893

[2] Gandhiji arrived at Shyampur from Narayanganj in the morning and laid the foundation of the National College Hospital building. He was presented with an address by the professors and students of the National College to which he replied in Hindi.

and doctors and far less in Medical Colleges. Patients, when they came under the treatment of the doctors and *kavirajas*, became all the more invalids. The education these professional men acquired was for money and so they were always anxious to earn more money. Mahatmaji said that he could confer benediction on boys on the condition that, after they come out of the Medical College, they would sacrifice their lives for the sake of the country.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-5-1925

66. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

May 18, 1925

DEAR GURUDEV,

Nepal Babu has sent me your very kind and cordial note[1]. I do want to pass a day or two at Bolpur. I would not think of your leaving Bolpur to meet me. I know the delicate state of your health. I shall inform you of the date when I can come.[2]

I am, Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN
via BOLPUR
E. I. RY.

From a photostat: G.N. 4629

67. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI[3]

May 18, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

Before you wrote to me,[4] I had realized your position. Such must be the lot of genuine workers. We were doing little when we were swimming with the tide. We have to exert ourselves only when we swim against it. Now we shall know whether we have strength. It is child's play for a soldier to fight against a

[1] This is not available.
[2] Gandhiji visited Santiniketan on May 29.
[3] Though the draft bears no address, the contents make it clear that it was addressed to Mahomed Ali.
[4] This communication is not available.

foe, however formidable. But not many can stand demoralization, distrust, indiscipline and want of faith among their own ranks. You and I have to face that fact.

My prayers are always with you and for you. My faith in the twins[1] is also unshakable, not in your method of work, however. If you rigidly set apart time for every activity, you will find a margin left. The busiest man has always time for more. For a godfearing man the whole day is prayer-time. The fixed times for prayer are merely finger posts. They show that we must have appointed times for all tasks. Have we not dedicated all to God? Even eating may well be prayer and fasting may well be an indulgence. Enough of sermonizing.

I miss you and I miss Gulnar[2]. All my flowers and trinkets are wasted. Tell her she must not grow too big for me.

With love to you all,

Yours,

M.K.G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

68. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*[3]

Vaishakha Vad 10, May 18, 1925

Didn't Anand[4] owe me a debt?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 80

69. *SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MYMENSINGH*[5]

May 19, 1925

Mahatmaji after having thanked the ladies on their address and presents said that by swaraj he meant dharma raj or Ram raj. Without dharma and morality there could be no swaraj for India. For Ram raj, he wanted to

[1] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali

[2] Addressee's daughter, wife of Shuaib Qureshi

[3] 1894-1951; grandson of Gandhiji's step-sister; Secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-23; member, Bombay Municipal Corporation, 1923-25, and later Mayor

[4] Addressee's mother

[5] At the meeting, held in the morning, hand-spun yarn, jewellery and coins were presented to Gandhiji. An address of welcome was read out in Bengali. Gandhiji replied in Hindi.

have Sitaji. It was for Sitaji that we could worship Ramachandra. If Sita did not take birth, there would have been no existence of Ramachandra. Mahatmaji prayed that his sisters be like Sita. Sita kept heart as well as body pure. He urged his sisters to purify their body by wearing khaddar. Sitaji used to wear cloth made in India. In her days not a bit of foreign cloth was imported into India. But ladies of the present day wanted cloth frcm France, Japan and Manchester. To use foreign cloth was impurity. For it implied that they forgot their poor brothers. There was a time when millions of his Indian sisters earned their bread by spinning with charkha. But for our use of foreign cloth their work on the chakha had not been stopped. Sisters ought to spin at least half an hour every day. Mahatmaji called mill-made cloth, "half-khaddar". He remarked that, although all his sisters, who had come to the meeting, wore khaddar, they must have done so either to express their love for him or to deceive him. But their love for India was what was required most—this would prompt them to use khaddar. He would feel quite satisfied if his sisters in Mymensingh undertook to do the following three things:—(1) Spinning on the charkha for half an hour a day, (2) use of khaddar and (3) abandonment of hatred of *Namasudras,* erroneously considered to be untouchables.

Mahatmaji, in conclusion, said that the presents that were given to him in the form of yarn, money and jewellery would be devoted to khaddar propaganda.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-5-1925

70. *SPEECH AT MYMENSINGH*[1]

May 19, 1925

I am feeling forlorn without either of Ali Brothers. For, with them I would have felt absolutely safe, through them I would have easily reached the Mussalman heart.[2]

Touching upon Hindu-Muslim question, he regretted that neither community was willing to surrender, not their vital interest, but little temporary interests. At present they were fighting not even for loaves and fishes, but for stones and not for vital interests. But he realized that, until they had cleansed their heart and purified their soul, they would not be able to live as brothers. He advised them not to endanger their unity on the rock of selfishness. After

[1] At a representative gathering at the Maharaja's palace, addresses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipality and the District Board of Mymensingh.

[2] This paragraph is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in *Young India,* 28-5-1925.

all, he believed the solution of this question did not depend on them. Optimistic as he was, he believed that God would show mercy on this blessed land and enable them to live as brothers, in spite of their having fought each other.

The Hindu and the Mussalman must each add a common article to their creeds, viz., that he can never live without the other. God who has placed together 7 crores of Mussalmans with 22 crores of Hindus will have some mercy on us and will make us live as brothers in spite of ourselves.[1]

Dealing with the question of khaddar and spinning he said that these two things were indispensable if they wanted to live with the masses. Had they not exploited the masses for their sake? Had they given any return to them? If they cared to travel through the length and breadth of India, they would easily find that they were living on the blood of their people. The result had been that poverty and pauperism had crept into the vitals of the nation and possessed their minds in such a way that they had forgotten that they had even the capacity for labour. In fact, the masses had become idlers perforce. Therefore they must spin. That was the reason why he asked all zamidars and distinguished men to spin and give some slight return to the masses. They complained that khaddar was coarse, khaddar was not durable, it was not good. How could that be if they did not spin half an hour for their poor brothers and sisters? Plying the charkha would not do. It could not produce a large quantity of yarn and why? Because the charkha was not worked properly. The best charkha they had yet got available in the market was the charkha of the Khadi Pratisthan.

Turning next to the people of Mymensingh, he made a passionate appeal to their sense of patriotism and hoped that they would work in the manner suggested by him. Mahatma Gandhi decried spurious khaddar in unmeasured terms; half khaddar to him was impure and should be burnt immediately. If they wanted good khadi, durable and fashionable, let them make a present of half an hour's labour for the masses, their poor sisters and brothers, who were famishing and starving, suffering from degrading poverty. He asked them to give half an hour free of charge and spin half an hour for the national cause and he immediately undertook to cheapen khaddar, make it good, fashionable and durable, and he assured them that he would bring them swaraj.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-5-1925

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account

71. TALK TO ZAMINDARS AT MYMENSINGH[1]

May 19, 1925

If you have your own dhobi, your own scavenger, why don't you have your own weaver? And for fine, beautiful yarn, you can get the services of the finest spinners in your parts.

Why do not leading men and educated men, take to the charkha?

Because they do not feel for the poor, and they do not feel because they do not know the sufferings of the poor. Please do not say they are lazy. We have helped them to become idle. How to create interest in them? You and I and all must plod on night and day and not be impatient like the boy who planted the mango seed and would not even wait for six months for the seed to take root and grow into a tree.

Young India, 28-5-1925

72. A REMARKABLE ADDRESS

In the majority of cases, addresses presented to me contain adjectives which I am ill able to carry. Their use can do good neither to the writers nor to me. They unnecessarily humiliate me, for I have to confess that I do not deserve them. When they are deserved, their use is superfluous. It cannot add to the strength of the qualities possessed by me. They may, if I am not on my guard, easily turn my head. The good that a man does is more often than not, better left unsaid. Imitation is the sincerest flattery. I commend it, therefore, to the attention of all admirers. If it is my spinning they like, let them admire it by doing it themselves; if it is my regularity they appreciate, let them flatter me by being regular themselves. And if it is my truthfulness and non-violence they treasure, let them show their appreciation by their conduct.

But not all the addresses contain a mere recital of my praises. On rare occasions they give me valuable information. A Chandpur address[2] was remarkable for a frank expression of its limita-

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

[2] This was presented to Gandhiji by the people of Chandpur on May 10, 1925. *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Chandpur", 10-5-1925.

tions. The address does contain some reference to my qualities, imaginary or real; but the greatest part of it is devoted to a catalogue of the activities of the inhabitants of Chandpur. Here is the catalogue:

1. Number of Congress members—Class "A" 10, class "B" 68, total 78.
2. Number of spinning-wheels working—245.
3. Average capacity of each wheel—100 yds. per hour, the highest speed being 500 yds. per hour.
4. Average count—12, the highest being 152.
5. Monthly output of yarn—1 maund.
6. Number of looms working with hand-spun and other yarn—more than one thousand. Only seven looms produce pure khadi.
7. Monthly output of pure khadi—250 yds.
8. Number of khaddar depots—3 only.
9. Average monthly consumption of khadi—worth 300 rupees.
10. Total number of national schools—4, total number of students being 167.

As regards liquor traffic, it has been gradually increasing since 1922.

Then follows an interesting commentary on most of the items. It is wound up as follows:

> We feel we will be failing in our obvious duty, if we do not allude to the terrible poverty and consequent mortality rampant amongst the people of the country. They are simply groaning under heavy indebtedness. The balance-sheet of most of them indicates the hopeless condition of utter bankruptcy. This state of things, brought about by the total annihilation of the cottage industries, often leads to serious crimes, and we shudder to conceive the final result of this economic depression of the people.

The record is certainly not a proud one. But there is nothing here to despair of. We, each one of us, can but do our best. We do not, cannot, control results which depend upon so many other circumstances. We may feel quite at ease, when we have done our real best. Unfortunately, in the majority of cases, we do not work or do it indifferently and still complain of poverty of results. All is well if we have done the best that is possible for us to do.

Truly, the problems that face us are enormous and many. For one man or many to presume to tackle them all at once is to arrogate omnipotence. Any such attempt is foredoomed to failure. Our difficulties are aggravated because we are a subject

nation. Many can be remedied if we were not. But it is equally true that we shall not come to our own unless we tackle as many now. Not to handle them till swaraj is obtained is to postpone both swaraj and the solution of the problems. He, therefore, who handles the main problems to the best of his ability helps their solution and brings swaraj nearer.

If, then, the workers in Chandpur have exerted their utmost, results shown by them need not be considered discouraging. Time must work in their favour, for it always does in favour of honest and industrious workers. Better to have even 10 "A" class members than none, and for me, it is any day better to have 10 working members than to have ten thousand members who will pay four annas per year and then no more think about the Congress than miss their four annas. The ten, if they will remain faithful to their trust, will soon convert themselves into one hundred. I know no alternative to the wheel. Those who do must set it up. Till then the ten who work the wheel must hold the field undaunted.

But my fear is that the organizers have not worked sufficiently strenuously. I discovered that there were nearly 120 volunteers in Chandpur. Now, of those nearly 100 knew how to spin, but hardly five or six spun daily. One of the resolutions makes spinning by volunteers obligatory. And if a volunteer does not strictly respect the franchise resolution, who else will? The Reception Committee should have been strict in the choice of its volunteers. If it could not get enough properly qualified men, it should have managed its work with a few. An unskilled surgeon is worse than no surgeon. An indifferent volunteer is often a hindrance [rather] than a help. Let me note, in passing, that the volunteers were extremely good to me. They served to their utmost. But I want not personal service and attachment, precious as both are; I want national service and national attachment. I want strictest devotion to duty and scrupulous fulfilment of all obligations imposed and accepted.

The address mentions increase in the liquor traffic. It is a serious thing and may be dealt with by workers who will specially dedicate themselves to the reform. But I fear that liquor traffic is one of those things which can be brought under effective control only by prohibition.

The concluding commentary is a statement of our general condition. Revival of the cottage industry, and not cottage industries, will remove the growing poverty. When once we have revived the one industry, all the other industries will follow. They will

add to the country's wealth. But the wheel alone can solve the general problem of starvation. Each district has no doubt its varying wants. They must have attention. But I would make the spinning-wheel the foundation on which to build a sound village life, I would make the wheel the centre round which all the other activities will revolve. No spinner enters the village life without coming in contact with and helping to solve the other problems that tax the villagers. But if a worker enters a village and takes up any activity that comes his way and not wheel, he will miss the central point and, therefore, simply grope without reaching every villager.

Young India, 21-5-1925

73. *'ON THE VERGE OF IT'*

After putting the questions he has, a correspondent thus concludes his letter:

> I hope you will be courteous enough to throw light on these points and continue to discuss with me until I do not talk nonsense. I am your follower and have gone to jail under your leadership and guidance. I have never gone to see and talk to you even when I was very near to you and had ample opportunity, simply because I hated to encroach upon your time. I have not even touched your feet. I now feel very much shaken in my faith in your reasoning and politics. I am not a revolutionary but I am on the verge of being a revolutionary. If you answer these questions satisfactorily, you may save me.

I now take his questions seriatim.

> 1. What is non-violence, an attitude of the mind or non-destruction of life? If it be the latter, is it possible to translate it into practice and carry it to its logical consequences when we destroy numberless lives daily in taking our meals, etc.? We cannot even eat vegetables in that case.

Non-violence is both an attitude of mind and action consequent upon it. No doubt, there is life in vegetables. But the taking of vegetable life is inevitable. It is none the less destruction of life. Only it may be regarded as excusable.

The second question is:

> 2. If we cannot avoid destroying life, it certainly does not mean that we should recklessly destroy it; but then, in proved cases of necessity it cannot be objected to on principle. It may be objected to on expediency.

Even in proved cases of necessity, violence cannot be defended "on principle". It may be defended on grounds of expedience.

The third questions is:

3. If non-violence is non-destruction of life, how can you consistently ask anybody to give up his own life in a cause howsoever holy and righteous it may be? Would that not be violence to one's own self ?

I can consistently ask a person to give up his life for a cause and yet not be guilty of violence. For non-violence means refraining from injury to others.

The fourth is:

4. It is human nature to love one's own life. If one should sacrifice one's life when necessary for his country and people, why should he not sacrifice the lives of others when necessary? We have only to prove whether it was necessary. It is, therefore, a matter of expediency again.

"He that shall love his own life shall lose it. He that shall lose his own life shall find it." Sacrifice of the lives of others cannot be justified on grounds of necessity, for it is impossible to prove necessity. We may not be judges ourselves. The sole judges must be those whose lives we would take. One good reason for non-violence is our fallible judgment. The inquisitors implicitly believed in the righteousness of their deeds, but we now know that they were wholly wrong.

The fifth question is:

5. What is the difference between sacrifice and murder?

Sacrifice consists in suffering in one's own person so that others may benefit. Murder consists in making others suffer unto death so that the murderer, or those others for whom he murders, may benefit.

The sixth question is:

6. Is a doctor, who operates upon you, condemnable, for he is violent in giving you trouble temporarily? Do we not praise him all the more for that—looking not to his violent action but to his attitude of mind which is to give relief to the patient?

This is a misuse of the word violence, which means causing injury to another without his consent or without doing any good to him. In my case, the surgeon caused me temporary pain with my written and willing consent and for my sole good. A revolutionary murders or robs not for the good of his victims, whom he often considers to be fit only to be injured, but for the supposed good of society.

His seventh question is:

7. Is not physical force as much a potent factor of life as any other force? As non-violence can be taken by cowards as a garb to cover their cowardice, so can violence be misused by brutes and tyrants. It does not prove that violence of itself is bad.

Physical force undoubtedly is a potent factor of life. Violence has certainly been misused by tyrants, but in the sense in which I have defined violence, its good use is inconceivable. See the definition in the answer to the preceding question.

The eighth question is:

8. You will put lunatics and dangerous criminals who are a nuisance to society in prisons. Will you allow us to capture those civilized criminals, who are functioning as government officials today, and deport or imprison them in some Himalayan caves instead of murdering them?

I am not sure that it is right to put lunatics or criminals, dangerous or otherwise, in prisons, i.e., for punishment. Lunatics are not so put even now. And we are reaching a time when even criminals will be put under restraint for their ultimate reform, not for their punishment. But I would gladly join any society for the confinement, under proper safeguards for their comfort, of the Viceroy and every civilian, English or Indian, who are today consciously or unconsciously bleeding India, provided that a scheme can be produced before me that is perfectly feasible from every point of view. And I would be prepared to join such a society even though it may be argued that such confinement might fall within my definition of violence.

The ninth question is:

9. What is more inhuman and terrible, rather what is more violent, to let 33 millions suffer, stagnate and perish, or a few thousand be killed? What would you prefer, to see the slow death of a mass of 33 millions through sheer degeneration, or killing of a few hundred of people? This certainly is to be proved that the killing of a few hundred will stop the degeneration of 33 millions. But then, it is a matter of detail and not principle. It may be later on discussed whether it is expedient or not. But if it is proved that by killing a few hundred, we can put a stop to the degeneration of 33 millions, will you object to violence on principle?

There is no principle worth the name if it is not wholly good. I swear by non-violence because I know that it alone conduces to the highest good of mankind, not merely in the next world but in this also. I object to violence because, when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is per-

manent. I do not believe that the killing of even every Englishman can do the slightest good to India. The millions will be just as badly off as they are today, if someone made it possible to kill off every Englishman tomorrow. The responsibility is more ours than that of the English for the present state of things. The English will be powerless to do evil if we will but do good. Hence my incessant emphasis on reform from within.

But, before the revolutionary, I have urged non-violence not on the highest ground of morality but on the lower ground of expedience. I contend that the revolutionary method cannot succeed in India. If an open warfare were a possibility, I may concede that we may tread the path of violence that the other countries have and at least evolve the qualities that bravery on the bettlefield brings forth. But attainment of swaraj through warfare I hold to be an impossibility for any time that we can foresee. Warfare may give us another rule for the English rule but not self-rule in terms of the masses. The pilgrimage to swaraj is a painful climb. It requires attention to details. It means vast organizing ability, it means penetration into the villages solely for the service of the villagers. In other words it means national education, i.e., education of the masses. It means an awakening of national consciousness among the masses. It will not spring like the magician's mango. It will grow almost unperceived like the banyan tree. A bloody revolution will never perform the trick. Haste here is most certainly waste. The revolution of the spinning-wheel is the quickest revolution conceivable.

The tenth and the last question is:

> 10. Is not all logic and reason discarded where vital interests of life are concerned? Is it not a fact that a few selfish, tyrant and obdurate men may, as they do, refuse to listen to reason and continue to rule, tyrannize and do injustice to a mass of people? Lord Krishna failed to bring about a settlement peacefully between the obdurate Kauravas and the Pandavas. *Mahabharata* may be fiction. Poor Krishna may be less spiritual. But even you failed to persuade your judge to resign from his post and not convict you, whom even he, as everybody else, regarded innocent.[1] How far can persuasion through self-sacrifice be successful in such cases?

It is sad but true that, where so-called vital interests are concerned, logic and reason are thrown to the wind. Tyrants are, indeed, obdurate. The English tyrant is obduracy personified. But he is a multi-headed monster. He refuses to be killed. He cannot be paid in his own coin, for he has left none for us to

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXIII, pp. 110-20.

pay him with. I have a coin that is not cast in his mint and he cannot steal it. It is superior to any he has yet produced. It is non-violence; and the symbol of it is the spinning-wheel. I have, therefore, presented it to the country with the fullest confidence. Krishna failed to do nothing he wished to do, so says the author of the *Mahabharata*. He was omnipotent. It is futile to drag Krishna from His heights. If He has to be judged as a mere mortal, I fear He will fare badly and will have to take a back seat. *Mahabharata* is neither fiction nor history commonly so called. It is the history of the human soul in which God as Krishna is the chief actor. There are many things in that poem that my poor understanding cannot fathom. There are in it many things which are obvious interpolations. It is not a treasure chest. It is a mine which needs to be explored, which needs to be dug deep and from which diamonds have to be extracted after removing much foreign matter. Therefore, I would urge my friends, the full-fledged revolutionaries, or those in the making, or on the verge of being such, to keep their feet firm on mother earth and not scale the Himalayan heights to which the poet took Arjuna and his other heroes. Anyway, I must respectfully refuse even to attempt the ascent. The plains of Hindustan are good enough for me.

To descend to the plains, then, let the questioner understand that I had not gone to the court to persuade the judge of my innocence. But on the contrary, I went there to plead fully guilty and ask for the highest penalty. For, the breach by me of the man-made law was deliberate. The judge did not, could not, believe me to be innocent. There was not much sacrifice in undergoing the imprisonment. True sacrifice is made of sterner stuff. Let my friend understand the implications of non-violence. It is a process of conversion. I am convinced. I must be pardoned for saying it that my out-and-out non-violence has converted many more Englishmen than any amount of threats or deeds of violence. I know that when conscious non-violence becomes general in India swaraj will not be far.

Young India, 21-5-1925

74. NOTES

Donors, Please Note

Though I have often remarked upon the unportability of addresses when they are framed or when they are put in expensive caskets, I continue to receive heavy frames and, sometimes, expensive caskets. The Calcutta Corporation is the greatest sinner so far as costliness is concerned. When I received its address, it was on a borrowed gold plate. The one specially ordered was not ready. During the present tour, Deshbandhu Das placed into my hands a beautifully made gold plate on which the whole address is carved. As soon as I received it, I was nervous as to where I should keep it and so was he, although it was in his own old mansion that he gave the plate. As he went, he called Mahadev Desai aside and left word with him that the plate should be put in a secure place. Fortunately, Babu Satish Mukerji was by me and I had already mentioned to him the fact of the gold plate and he had taken charge of it. It will have to go where all my other costly presents have gone. The friends to whom I have given these things for disposal have not yet decided where to sell them or to put them to some museum. How much better, if knowing that I cannot keep costly things, those who must give me addresses will give me inexpensive ones? And frames? Well, they are most inconvenient things to carry. Most friends have recognized the situation and nowadays give me addresses printed on khaddar. That to my mind is the simplest and the best method. I can carry with me any amount of khaddar. To have addresses printed on it is so much spread of khaddar. But if a casket must accompany even a khaddar address, I commend to the attention of future donors the example of Faridpur. Both the Municipality and the Jeevashiva Mission gave inexpensive cylinders, one made of stained bamboo and the other of bamboo covered with local matting with simple silver tops. The latter could easily have been omitted. The simplest thing may be made elegant by a little touch of art which one can copy from one's surroundings. The Indian village life, though it has become shoddy, has still enough poetry and art left in it for us to copy. In Travancore they made copious use of the palm leaf. Indeed, I would advise artistic simplicity about all addresses, but in my case it is imperative for the very good reason that I have neither the convenience nor the desire for keeping costly or bulky caskets and frames.

Inverted Untouchability

A correspondent writes:

> You have answered a correspondent's query as to how to remove the untouchability obtaining amongst the untouchables themselves. Let me put another query similar to it.
>
> Perhaps you do not know that some of the "untouchables" themselves labour under a sense of sin attaching to the act of touching a "touchable", or approaching within a particular distance of him, or drawing water from his well, or entering his temple, or doing any such thing in relation to the "touchable"—though allowed and even invited to do so. The "untouchable" thinks that he would be transgressing his *maryada*[1] and be guilty of sin in doing any such acts. This is the inverse of the untouchability usually so-called and known to obtain amongst the higher castes (touchable and untouchable) against the lower ones. This is untouchability up side down. It may be the case—and the touchables may flatter themselves with the thought—that this sort of untouchability (little known, but as strong as the other) is not retaliatory in spirit. All the same it is there, and even the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, who interviewed you in Sabarmati Jail and toured India in 1922,[2] noted it in Anand and Bardoli taluks in Gujarat. What, I wonder, is the remedy you would advise anti-untouchability workers to adopt to cure the "untouchables" of this inverse of untouchability? Is this also a sin like the other sort? Does not the so-called *maryada-dharma* come in our way here? Is it possible for a conscientious untouchable believer in this dharma to rescue a drowning Brahmin whom he otherwise could?

I am not unaware of the atrocious result of untouchability observed by the correspondent. Sometimes, I find it difficult to make the "untouchables" approach me, much less to touch me. I do not believe that it is a question primarily of religion with the untouchables not to touch the touchables. They simply do not realize the possibility of touching those who have hitherto regarded them as untouchables. In the majority of cases therefore, it is fear that deters the untouchables even under permission from touching the untouchables. The case is on a par with that of the French prisoner who, having been for years locked up in the dungeons of Bastille, could not, when discharged, bear the light of day. He had almost lost the sense of sight. But I have come across in Bengal a suggestion made to the so-called untouchables that they should, by way of retaliation, regard the so-called higher class Hindus as untouchables, refuse to them all the services they

[1] Bounds of propriety

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXIII, pp. 104-9.

are now rendering and refuse also water or food at their hands. I should deplore the day that such retaliation comes. But, in this age of freedom and also licence, it need cause no surprise if what is now an object of mere talk is translated into action and retaliation descends upon the devoted heads of the so-called higher classes. Nature gives us ninety nine chances of reform and, if we do not take advantage of any of them, the hundredth time she compels obedience and accompanies it with a punishment which at least makes us feel uneasy.

A Correspondent's Dilemma

Thus writes a correspondent.[1] I am not aware of having "placed before man the ideal of a sanyasin". On the contrary, I have constantly kept before India the ideal of swaraj. In doing so, I have preached simplicity no doubt. I have also preached godliness. But godliness, simplicity and kindred qualities are not the exclusive property of privilege or sanyasin. Moreover, I do not for one moment grant that a sanyasin need be a recluse caring not for the world. A sanyasin is one who cares not for himself but cares all his time for others. He has renounced all selfishness. But he is full of selfless activity, even as God is full of sleepless and selfless activity. A sanyasin, therefore, to be true to his creed of renunciation, must care for swaraj, not for his own sake (he has it), but for the sake of others. He has no worldly ambition for himself. That does not mean that he may not help others to understand their place in the world. If the sanyasins of the old did not seem to bother their heads about the political life of society, it was because society was differently constructed. But politics properly so-called rule every detail of our lives today. We come in touch, that is to say, with the State on hundreds of occasions whether we will or no. The State affects our moral being. A sanyasin, therefore, being well-wisher and servant *par excellence* of society, must concern himself with the relations of the people with the State, that is to say, he must show the way to the people to attain swaraj. Thus conceived, swaraj is not a false goal for anyone. The Lokamanya[2] never gave the country a greater truth than when

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, claiming to be a student of Gandhiji's writings and speeches, noticed incosistency between Gandhiji's "idealization" of sannyasa and his struggle for swaraj, and asked Gandhiji how he reconciled the one with the other.

[2] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); Indian political leader, scholar and writer, popularly known as "Lokamanya"; one of the founders of Deccan Education Society, Poona and the newspapers, the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta*

he taught the meanest of us to say: "Swaraj is my birthright." A sanyasin, having attained swaraj in his own person, is the fittest to show us the way. A sanyasin is in the world, but he is not of the world. In all the most important functions of life he does exactly as we the common people do. Only his outlook upon them is different. He does without attachment the things we do with attachment. It is given to everyone of us to cultivate detachment. It is a worthy aspiration surely for all.

Cruelty to Animals

Now that I have shouldered the tremendous burden of controlling an all-India cow-protection organization, my correspondence already heavy has become heavier for the inclusion of letters on subjects akin to cow-protection. Here is a sample:[1]

I have often walked through the streets of Calcutta. What the writer says about cruelty to the draught cattle and horses is only too true. The writer's indictment of owners is not an exaggeration, though my own opinion is that the owners are more indifferent than calculatedly cruel. They too are amenable to reason as are the carriers and drivers. How to reach them is the question. To look after the condition of animals used within municipal jurisdiction is the function of the municipality concerned. Private philanthropic bodies can, however, write to or wait on the owners concerned and call upon them to remove all cause of complaint wherever it may exist. I feel sure that much can be done by constant watch and a judicious appeal to the parties concerned.

Of the condition of chickens and turkeys, I know nothing; but if the crime is committed in the municipal market, the Corporation can easily deal with it. Much of the cruelty practised by men on dumb creation can be dealt with by a proper mobilization of the humane forces. The Bengal Presidency Council of Women can depute volunteers to note all the cases that come under their observation and report them to the Corporation or the individual owners concerned.

Young India, 21-5-1925

[1] Gandhiji quoted here a letter on behalf of the Bengal Presidency Council of Women detailing cruelties to animals in Calcutta, such as misuse of buffaloes and bullocks for heavy transport, extraction of milk by blowing, etc., and appealing to Gandhiji to write or speak deprecating such disgraceful practices.

75. *SPEECH TO UNTOUCHABLES, DINAJPUR*[1]

May 21, 1925

Gandhiji had . . . nothing more to tell them than that they should not get restive; that they should take comfort in the thought that their condition was much better than that of many of their brethren elsewhere; and that they could, if they chose, send a notice to the Municipality that they were going away leaving the conservancy work to the mercy of the gods, if their demands were not granted, bearing in mind, however, that they had come and settled there of their own accord and not at the invitation of the Municipality!

Young India, 4-6-1925

76. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DINAJPUR*

May 21, 1925

In his reply he expressed his high satisfaction in receiving the addresses in the sweet Bengali,[2] Hindi and Sanskrit languages. For this treat he was ready to forgive the English of the District Board address. He then paid a tribute to the orderly behaviour of the crowd and the silence they observed according to his wishes. He also spoke highly of the spinners. He observed:

During all my tours in Bengal, the spinners of Dinajpur have pleased me best and I am charmed to see them work. It is also a very good sign that pleaders, doctors and other persons placed high in society were spinning together, sitting side by side with *Santhals*, *Mehtars* and other people so long held in low esteem.

He finished his address after emphasizing his triple programme of khaddar, removal of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-5-1925

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

[2] This was read out by Jogendra Chandra Chakravarti, president of the local Congress Committee.

77. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, DINAJPUR

May 21, 1925

A friend once told me that whenever he felt the urge of passion he took up the spinning-wheel to forget it, and another that whenever he was angry he took up the spinning-wheel and felt calm. That is to say, the spinning-wheel gives one the peace of mind one needs for observing *brahmacharya*[1]. Two or three days ago, some boys told me that they could not work on the spinning-wheel, that they were ready to mount the gallows and asked me to give them a programme which would have on them the exciting effect of an intoxicant. I felt that these students did not observe *brahmacharya*, since they did not like the spinning-wheel which gives peace. I feel that the spinning-wheel has all the virtues needed to make one's life truthful, pure and peaceful and fill it with the spirit of service. I, therefore, beg of you all to give half an hour's labour daily in the form of spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

78. INTERVIEW AT DINAJPUR[2]

May 21, 1925

Questioned as to whether he regarded his Bardoli decision as a mistake, he replied most emphatically in the negative.

That has been one of the sanest acts of my life. Future historians will regard me as the saviour of India at the most critical period of her history. If I had not taken that step I would have been regarded by posterity as the greatest monster in the guise of a political leader, and India would have been doomed for many generations to come. It required Herculean courage to order the retreat of that army marching onward and [I] feel proud to say that I was not wanting in that courage at that time. My ultimatum to the Viceroy was nothing—even a child

[1] Celibacy

[2] Gandhiji was interviewed by the local landholders and others at the Maharaja's guest house where he was staying. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and English.

could put his signature to it, but the Bardoli resolution truly required heroic courage. It appears I am giving a certificate to myself, but I must tell you frankly what I feel.

Q. Your programme was within an inch of success as admitted by Sir George Lloyd[1] himself. The Europeans were all terribly afraid.

A. They were afraid because they thought it was going to be a criminal instead of a civil disobedience. You see, the weapon wielded by me is entirely foreign to theirs. They had no instrument to measure me and as such [were] quite powerless to tackle my activities with.

Q. Then, was it not a mistake to cry halt, since your plan was running so successfully?

A. No, my friends, the country was not prepared, as Chauri Chaura[2] demonstrated. There was sin amongst our own workers. The passions and prejudices were not yet under control, and, even if swaraj were established, it would not have lasted a moment owing to strifes and dissensions amongst ourselves.

After reiterating the general economic and political importance of the charkha, he added:

It is moreover a splendid test as to how far our workers have the capacity for sincere and devoted work. I am fully convinced that, at present, charkha is the only key to India's salvation.

Q. But, Mahatmaji, surely you are in a minority as to the efficacy of the charkha in winning national freedom.

A. I do not care. Even if I be in the minority of one and all India ranged on the other side, I will stand erect with my views. Those who differ from me are welcome to serve the country according to their lights, but I assert with all the emphasis I can command that charkha will bring us swaraj. All these may appear tall talk to you, but they are not. To me it is all practical common sense. Just as a musician can say with confidence that, if he strikes a certain string, a definite note will issue; so it is with me in regard to the solution of this problem.

Mahatmaji was then told that there was some doubt among orthodox

[1] Governor of Bombay. *Vide* Vol. XXIII, Appendix VI.

[2] A village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh where, on February 5, 1922, the mob set fire to the police station and 22 constables were burnt alive. Gandhiji was profoundly shocked by this and imposed on himself a five-day fast on February 12.

Hindus as to how far he wished to carry his untouchability doctrine. With his characteristic simplicity and brevity he replied:

I will explain it in one word. There are four classes among the Hindus and I recognize no fifth one. My conviction comes from the perusal of the Shastras. The so-called untouchables should be treated like Sudras and no worse. Those who have no objection to inter-dining with the Sudras should have none to treat the untouchables in a like manner. But those who do not dine with the Sudras need not of course do so with the untouchables.

Somebody expressed regret that the Hindu-Muslim unity of 1920-21 has of late been decaying. Mahatmaji sorrowfully replied:

There was none worth the name. It was only an attempt at unity. Can any power in the world separate my wife from me? When there will be real heart-to-heart unity, no amount of temptations and cajolery from third parties will be able to break it up.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-5-1925

79. SPEECH AT WORKERS' SCHOOL, BOGRA[1]

May 22, 1925

I shall not speak to you on the charkha. You know what I have been saying elsewhere. I shall, however, tell you something about ahimsa in order to strengthen your faith in it. A student at Dacca told me that he would more willingly face the gallows than ply the wheel which afforded no excitement.[2] I have no doubt that he believed neither in ahimsa nor *brahmacharya*. For the wheel is an emblem of peace and ahimsa, and I have pinned my faith to it, because ahimsa is not a policy with me, but a creed, a religion. Why do I regard it as such? Because I know that it is not *himsa* or destructive energy that sustains the world, it is ahimsa, the creative energy. I do admit that the destructive energy is there, but it is evanescent, always futile before the creative which is permanent. If the destructive one had the upper hand, all the sacred ties—love between parents and child, brother and sister, master and disciple, rulers and the ruled, would be snapped. Ahimsa is like the sun whose worship, as the symbol

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

[2] *Vide* "Talk to Students at Dacca", 17-5-1925.

of God, our *rishis* immortalized in the *Gayatri*. As the sun "keeps watch over man's mortality", going his eternal rounds and dispelling darkness and sin and gloom, even so does ahimsa. Ahimsa inspires you with love than which you cannot think of a better excitement. And that is why my faith in the wheel, which is a symbol of peace and love, is increasing as I grow older. And that is why I do not think I am committing an impropriety in spinning whilst I am talking to you. As I am turning the wheel, I am saying to myself: "Why does God give me my daily bread, whilst He starves multitudes of men? Let Him starve me also, or enable me to do something to remove their starvation." And as I turn it, I am practising ahimsa and truth which are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Ahimsa is my God, and Truth is my God. When I look for Ahimsa, Truth says, 'Find it out through me.' When I look for Truth, Ahimsa says, 'Find it out through me.' So the rhapsody easily became one on charkha and ahimsa instead of that on ahimsa alone.

Young India, 4-6-1925

80. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOGRA[1]

May 22, 1925

Replying Mahatmaji thanked them for the addresses and assured them he would hand over the purse to the Khadi Pratishthan for cheapening khaddar and distributing charkhas free of charge to the poor. In this connection Mahatmaji paid a tribute to Dr. Ray with whom his connection dated from 1901. It was the late Mr. Gokhale, said Mahatmaji, who introduced him to Prafulla Chandra and since then their mutual relations had grown firmer. It was in the fitness of things that he should think himself fortunate in visiting this district which recalled to his mind the glorious work done and being done by Dr. Ray for the poor.

Mahatmaji added that his conviction in the potency of the charkha had been strengthened by Dinajpur and Bogra where for the first time he had seen rich and poor, fathers and little boys and girls, untouchables and Brahmins, all sitting together and spinning for the country's cause. This he said, augured well for the future.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-5-1925

[1] Gandhiji was presented with addresses on behalf of the Municipality, the District Board and the public.

81. SPEECH AT TALODA[1]

May 22, 1925

At the meeting in Bogra I said that for me a visit to this place was a pilgrimage, and I say it here again. Perhaps you do not know the sacrifices made by Dr. Ray as much as I do, and when I heard that this was one of the many centres of his activities, I decided to make this pilgrimage once. Moreover, when I came here and saw that the greater number of those who had been helped by him were Muslims my joy and my regard for him rose immeasurably. For, only when Hindus serve Muslims in this manner and Muslims serve Hindus will there be a spontaneous union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims. I very much regret that neither Maulana Shaukat Ali nor Maulana Mahomed Ali is present here to witness this rare sight. The condition of the country today renders it difficult for our workers to leave their tasks and go anywhere. But I have no doubt that both the brothers will be very happy when I tell them about this place.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

82. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

Jeth Sud 1 [May 23, 1925][2]

BHAISHRI KALYANJI[3],

I have your letter. Tell Parvati[4] to write to me occasionally. I hope you take great interest in the Bardoli work. I am keeping well. I enclose a letter of blessings for Chi. Rukhi. I trust the marriage was celebrated with simplicity and everything went

[1] Where a khadi centre was run by Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ray

[2] Gandhiji toured Bengal in 1925; *Jeth Sud* 1 in that year fell on May 23.

[3] Congress leader of Surat district; educationist and author; first Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Gujarat State in 1960

[4] Wife of Pragji Desai

off smoothly. My tour in Bengal will be further extended.[1] I shall have to go to Assam too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2676

83. BENGAL'S SACRIFICE

I overflow with joy to see examples of purest sacrifice in Bengal. The whole family of a zamindar has taken to khadi. All the women spin. The men and women wear khadi exclusively. The zamindar has made over his house and his land for the use of Khadi Pratishthan. The sacrifice made by Satish Babu, who is the life of Khadi Pratishthan, is something extraordinary. He used to earn a monthly salary of Rs. 1,500 in the Chemical Works of Dr. Ray. He had been provided with a bungalow too. He could have got more if he had asked for it. He was doing khadi work even then, but he was not satisfied with that. His tender heart felt that, if he attempted two tasks at a time, both might suffer in consequence. He was the very life of the Chemical Works and, if he did not give his full time to it, it would certainly suffer. But, then, khadi meant service of the poor, and he did not think it right that he should do that work in his spare time. Just as it is a sin for a man to have two wives, so also it is wrong for a man to make two things his life's mission. Moreover, no sacrifice is too great in the cause of khadi. Arguing thus with himself he decided in an instant to leave the Works which he himself had built up. And now he meets his household expenses from the income from his meagre savings and devotes all the 24 hours of the day to the cause of khadi. He has by now opened eleven branches of his centre, out of which five are already in production, and he is thinking of opening more still. Through his efforts 5,060 spinning-wheels are plying. The number of handlooms weaving pure khadi is 597.

His wife, too, has joined her husband in this work. This good lady must be unhappy to have to face want in place of the plenty of former days, and it must be hard for her to be contented with one of the small blocks in a rented tenement in place of an independent bungalow to live in; but she bears all these hardships with a cheerful face.

[1] It was extended up to August 31, 1925.

Satish Babu's, however, is not the only instance of this kind. Many other young men have been making sacrifices which fill us with admiration. Satish Babu had much and he gave up much but he has no problem of meeting his daily needs. He has, on the whole, no hardship regarding accommodation. But there are about a hundred young men who receive Rs. 20 a month to meet all their needs. We cannot realize how difficult life in Bengal is without seeing the conditions ourselves. In the rainy season, they are forced practically to live in water. At any time the houses, all of them, may be washed away by floods. Even for going from one house to another they have to use small boats. The insanitary conditions at such a time are impossible to describe. These young men suffer such hardships and serve the people. Many of them are engaged in khadi work and some in national schools. Spinning, of course, is being done in all schools.

In these conditions, there can be no question of their being able to indulge their palate. They cannot always get milk and curds. The usual food is rice and dal. Pure vegetarians are rare in Bengal. Even those who do not eat meat eat fish. These poor workers do eat fish, if nothing else. We must admit that this is a great help when they do not get milk and curds. This fact does not detract from the value of their sacrifice. I have mentioned this fact of their having fish to eat, only because I do not want to be guilty of exaggeration in describing the young men's hardships.

All these young men are educated. Many of them were professors and drew big salaries. They do not regret their sacrifice. On the contrary, they feel joy in it. Were it not so, they would not be able to keep up the extremely difficult sacrifice they have made. When I think of their sacrifice, Gujarat's sacrifice, what little there has been, seems insignificant by comparison. The sacrifices which I see here made by the educated class can only be compared with similar sacrifices in Maharashtra.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

84. MY NOTES

IF ONE IS BOYCOTTED?

A gentleman writes:[1]

To this there is only one reply I can give. However unjustly *mahajans*[2] act, we should not take them to courts. Let them inflict any punishment they choose. If we submit to it, their hearts will melt and they will repent. Moreover, when a *mahajan* acts unjustly one should especially welcome being ostracized by it. There is nothing to be gained by remaining in a community in which people sell girls in marriage, in which the atmosphere is vitiated by hypocrisy and whose *mahajan* connives at its members eating meat and drinking. The institution of caste is only a tradition and not an essential part of dharma. Membership of a community confers some advantages. When, however, the institution becomes an instrument of immorality, the best course is to defy it. The principle on which we have acted in resorting to non-co-operation with the Government should also be applied to one's caste and one can non-co-operate with it.

But in this case there is no need at all to do anything of that kind. Here it is the community which ostracizes a member. The latter should welcome this as a happy event. But this can be done only by one who has followed dharma in his conduct, who has served the community and willingly obeyed its rules which promote morality. Only a man of self-control will welcome ostracism, the man who lives for pleasure will be hurt by it. But, then, it is not for a person of the latter type to interest himself in the abolition of untouchability, it is work which should be taken up only by a man of self-control. This movement is not intended to enlarge the scope of enjoyment in life; it is meant to increase opportunities for service, to see that no one is excluded from the scope of our service.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether *mahajans*, which ostracized those who discouraged untouchability but took no action against members who were guilty of real sins, should not be taken to courts of law.

[2] Representative bodies managing the affairs of communities

Indian States

A gentleman has asked me this question.[1] There is some truth in what he says, but there is also another side to the question. Where the subjects have some spirit in them, the ruler will not act unjustly. To a people without spirit, what difference does it make whether they are ruled by a king or have a republican form of Government? What will they do with power who do not know how to use it? That is why I have often said: "As the subjects, so the ruler."[2] Wherever I have seen injustice being done, I have observed that the subjects are also to blame, because of their weakness. In such States, every official acts as if he himself were the ruler.

I have not favoured the existence of States where there is no control over the rulers. The form and degree of control are matters for the ruler and subjects in each State to decide. Wherever the subjects are vigilant, it is impossible to do injustice. Wherever they slumber, there is bound to be injustice no matter what type of Government they have. We can have an Indian Government with a clean and perfectly just administration. We have before us the example of Rama's rule. The evils we find in the present-day Indian States are to be attributed, on the one hand, to the evils among the subjects and, on the other, to those of British rule. Hence the prevailing anarchy in the Indian States should occasion no surprise. When some Indian States, though subject to evil influences from both these directions, enjoy a reputation for good administration, does not this fact speak well for their sense of moral responsibility? In all that I have said or written on this subject, I only mean that it is not right to hold that there is nothing worth preserving in Indian States and that the best course is to abolish them. It is quite possible to reform them and, if reformed, they can become model governments. I certainly do not mean that they should continue to exist in the same condition in which they are today.

Zamindar's Services

Chaudhari Raghuvir Narayansingh is a zamindar of Meerut. He has not gone back on the sacrifices he had made at the time of the non-co-operation movement. All the members of his family are

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had stated that, from its very nature, the rule of Indian Princes tended towards despotism, and asked Gandhiji whether he favoured the continued existence of Indian States.

[2] Reversing the saying, "As the ruler, so the subjects,"

khadi-lovers. He had taken a pledge, at Belgaum, to enrol 500 spinning members of the Congress. Referring to that pledge, he writes:[1]

> It is true that Chaudhariji has not been able to enrol 500 spinning members. Even so, his enthusiasm for the cause is something which others would do well to emulate. If many rich people join in this work, spinning and khadi would make rapid progress.

JAIN "MUNIS"[2] AND SPINNING-WHEEL

I have received several letters about the report which appeared in *Navajivan* of the conversation I had in Palitana on the spinning-wheel.[3] I do not wish to be drawn into a discussion on this subject; it may not, however, be out of place to clarify a few points. I have studied Jain Shastras according to my lights, but I know that I am not at all qualified to explain their meaning. In the conversation referred to, I only explained the meaning of ahimsa and of being a *muni*. It is possible that Jain philosophy does not accept my meaning. I would be sorry if that was so, and admit that my view was different from the accepted Jain view. Even so, I should have the right to state what appeals to my reason and my heart. I may be mistaken in my view and, if I am, I am bound to suffer for my error; if I have erred through ignorance, I must correct my error as soon as I realize it. My explanation of the meaning of ahimsa and of being a *muni* ought not to hurt any Jain. Why should anyone feel hurt when there was no intention on my part at all to cause any pain? If someone does not agree with our view and we are convinced that we are right, we may by all means think that the other person is a fool, but why should we feel hurt?

Having said this, I repeat in all humility that at this time it is the sacred duty even of *munis* to work at the spinning-wheel for general welfare. As they are entitled to have food and drink in order that they may live and serve others, so it is their duty to spin for the service of others. In my humble view, therefore, a *muni* who refuses to do work which may save even one soul does not deserve to be called a *muni*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had expressed his regret that, owing to the illness and death of his elder brother, he had not been able to fulfil his pledge, assured Gandhiji of his continuing interest in khadi and given details of the work he had been doing for the cause.

[2] Monks

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 464-5.

85. NEEDLESS EXPENDITURE

A long letter lies before me. It contains a well-deserved but gentle criticism of our present movement and of the workers engaged in it. I reproduce below extracts from it which one should read:[1]

I have given a summary of the 25-page letter almost in the correspondent's own words. The writer is a thoughtful person and has said everything with a good motive. I know nothing about some of his allegations, but it is indeed my experience that public funds are being misused a great deal. I have even criticized this from time to time. I have known many instances of more money than was necessary having been spent on the comforts of workers. This practice is very much less prevalent now, but I must admit that there is still room for reform. There is certainly some substance in the complaint that expenses on conveyance are incurred much too readily. We now wish to serve the poorest of the poor and to be their representatives. I have no doubt, therefore, that there should be much greater simplicity in our lives than there is at present. A carriage must not be hired so long as one can walk the distance. Public workers arriving as one's guests need not be treated to banquets. Workers come together not to enjoy dinners but to render service.

I have not understood what the correspondent has in mind in the veiled reference he has made to the subject of association with women. The point did not become clear to me even after I had read the whole letter. But one can guess a little from the analogy the writer has used. I have no doubt that seeking women's company for its own sake is sinful and reprehensive. Workers who are guilty of this can render little service to the people. But association with women in the ordinary course of public work is unavoidable and, therefore, to be accepted. We have kept women very much suppressed. They have lost their womanhood. A woman has a right to go out of her home in order to serve, it is her duty to do so. As day by day women come to take greater part in our movement, we shall see more

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had complained of the workers' love of comforts and their preference for foreign articles, and also drawn Gandhiji's attention to the needless expenditure incurred on his account whenever he visited a place.

and more men and women coming together in meetings. This seems to me quite a normal situation.

That *brahmacharya* which can be observed only by living in a forest is neither *brahmacharya* nor self-control. Many would like to live in a forest. Everyone will find such solitude beneficial in some measure. But it is to be sought in order that it may help one in reflection and in striving for self-realization, and not for one's safety. He alone who, though living in the midst of the busy world, is unaffected by its concerns is a man of self-control and lives in safety.

The walls which were erected in the old days may have been necessary in those times. But we see in Europe in these days that, though large numbers of men and women mix with great freedom, they are able to preserve their moral character and purity. If anyone believes that it is impossible to preserve one's purity in Europe, he betrays his utter ignorance. It is true, certainly, that it is difficult for us to preserve our purity in Europe. But the reason is not that women enjoy great freedom in Europe, but that people there look upon enjoyment as the only good in life. Moreover, we are not accustomed to the freedom that obtains in Europe in these matters.

The example of Europe is useful to us only to a certain extent. To follow it in every respect would be dangerous. My aim in referring to it is merely to show that the idea of association with women being reprehensible in all circumstances, or its being sinful for a man of self-control, is not true at all times and in all places.

In introducing whatever reforms are necessary in our culture, we should take into account the general atmosphere in our country. On the one hand, we have to introduce reforms in the conditions of women's life and, on the other, we have to guard against any harmful consequence during the transitional stage. We shall also have to take some risks. I have received complaints from one or two places to the effect that all is not well there. I have been inquiring into the matter to the extent that it lies in my power to do so.

According to me, it is desirable for a man and a woman to avoid being alone together at all times and in all places, in order to safeguard their purity. If the relationship is pure, there is no need for privacy. There is need for reform in our education, our speech, our diet and our habits. The very thought of our obeying in modern times some of the injunctions of the Shastras which were laid down for their times makes me shudder. As it

was thought to be a sin even to look at a woman, the fear has taken possession of us that we cannot look at a woman without evil thoughts. A son feels purified by the sight of his mother. There can be no sin in a brother's innocent look at his sister. Sin depends on the state of one's mind. A man who can never look at a woman without an evil thought had better put out his eyes, or live in a forest till he was pure enough. Anyone who keeps looking at a woman without reason and yet protests that he has no evil thought in his mind is a hypocrite. But the man who is afraid to look at a woman when he happens to meet one should overcome his timidity. It is definitely sinful to stare at a woman who is not known to us, but there can be no inflexible rule in this matter. No matter how many screens you erect, a polluted mind will look for opportunities for sin and, not getting them, will at any rate go on sinning mentally. A pure mind will survive temptations which assail unexpectedly and preserve unsullied purity.

Finally, the man of self-control should, without resentment, keep in mind the suggestions made by the correspondent, be vigilant and go on with his work of service.

But the most important part of the foregoing letter concerns me. I think that the correspondent's criticism is fully justified. For the expenditure that is being incurred in my name the responsibility, I have no doubt, rests on me. I often feel that much needless expenditure is incurred for my sake. I have quarrelled good-humouredly with a number of my friends over this matter. In many cases, I write in advance about my needs. Despite this, excessive love will not refrain from excess. It incurs expense under one excuse or another. All this cannot always be prevented, however much one tries. Maybe this is because of my weakness. It is possible that my mind secretly craves for pleasures about which I am not conscious. I am a mahatma in name, but it is certain that I am an *alpatma*[1]. Else why do I not completely discourage all excess, even at the risk of hurting my friends? Let me hope that such a time too will come. I have done many such things in my life. Here, I only acknowledge my fault and lighten it somewhat, and assure the correspondent that his letter has made me more vigilant and I will remain so in future.

I shall have to defend myself on one point, namely, sanitary conveniences. I learnt 35 years ago that a lavatory must be as clean as a drawing-room. I learnt this in the West. I believe that many rules about cleanliness in lavatories are observed

[1] A small soul

more scrupulously in the West than in the East. There are some defects in their rules in this matter, which can be easily remedied. The cause of many of our diseases is the condition of our lavatories and our bad habit of disposing of excreta anywhere and everywhere. I, therefore, believe in the absolute necessity of a clean place for answering the call of nature and clean articles for use at the time, have accustomed myself to them and wish that all others should do the same. The habit has become so firm in me that even if I wished to change it I would not be able to do so. Nor do I wish to change it. My host is put to some trouble in providing these facilities. But to order out a commode from Bombay on that account is certainly wrong. A secluded spot, a hole dug in the ground, if it is open land, and a few steps around it are all that I need. It is necessary for this spot to be near the place where I sleep. In cities this is possible only if a commode is provided, and so many friends use it. But it is not necessary to get a commode made in Bombay. Any carpenter can make the box and a half kerosene tin can serve as the pan. One can point out many more devices for maintaining cleanliness and meeting our needs.

None of the equipment need be of foreign make. The principle of khadi certainly implies that even the other articles we use should, as far as possible, have been made in our own country. Wearing khadi can never mean licence to use all other articles of foreign make. But khadi also does not mean that one should hate a thing simply because it is foreign-made. Khadi means conservation, not destruction. The destruction implicit in the process of conservation is inevitable. Hence we should conserve only that which is absolutely necessary. We cannot do without cloth, and cloth can easily be produced in India. The textile industry provides employment to crores of people in India. Hence khadi means safeguarding their means of livelihood. Wearing khadi, therefore, is a sacred duty and, for the same reason, wearing foreign cloth and for that matter even Indian mill-made cloth is morally wrong. But a medicine called "iodine" which is imported from the West and which cannot be produced in India is a necessity and, therefore, acceptable though foreign-made. But those public workers who use foreign, or even indigenous, articles merely to increase their comforts violate dharma. A servant of the country can never be guilty of this. It is, thus, altogether wrong for a servant to take mangoes all the way from Bombay to Mayavati merely to pander to his palate. If a servant spends two rupees where only one will do, it is open theft.

I, therefore, give below what I have often conveyed to friends about my needs. Anyone who keeps ready more conveniences for me than those indicated below will not be obliging me, nor serving the people, nor helping himself.

I want the place for answering the call of nature to be as clean as that for sleeping.

I shall be satisfied if I have a clean place with fresh air in which I can work and rest and sleep. A bedstead is not necessary. I carry with me what I require as bedding and covering and hence there is no need to provide a bed or mattress for me.

For food, a maximum of three seers of goat's milk every day and two sour lemons will suffice for me. The dry fruit which I need besides these two, I carry with me. I do not require ghee made from goat's milk. If I need a preparation made from goat's milk during a journey, I get it made before I start and carry it with me. I consider it a great sin to get ghee made from goat's milk at great cost.

No car is needed for my comfort. But one can certainly be pressed into service to save time.

It is certainly not necessary to have a first-class bogey for me. For myself, I do require second-class accommodation at present, but third-class accommodation will be good enough for my companions. Sometimes, men and women friends travel with me at their own expense. They arrange for their own accommodation in trains.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

86. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"

May 25, 1925

Forward with the spinning-wheel. For I know that through it we can give strength to the Swarajists. Let the readers of *Forward* . . .[1] every house with the wheel and we shall have Subhas Chandra Bose in our midst in no time.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 8049

[1] The source is illegible here.

87. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

May 25, 1925

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have your note. Of course we must not enter upon arbitration unless we have a proper deed of reference. The parties know that I have insisted upon that from the first. I have also stipulated that they must not bind me to time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 3114. Courtesy: Kashinath N. Kelkar

88. NOTES

LATEST RETURNS

Here are the latest returns, supplied by the All-India Conress Committee, of Congress membership:

	PROVINCE		Last month		Current month		Total
			A	B	A	B	
1.	Ajmer	..	2	15	..	..	17
2.	Andhra	..	..	..	..	..	1,965
3.	Assam	..	113	1	..	..	114
4.	Bihar	..	718	261	..	..	979*
5.	Bengal	..	354	1,919	..	..	2,273
6.	Berar	..	..	..	6	20	26†
7.	Burma	..	42	28	33	28	61
8.	C.P. (Hindi)	..	..	..	..	..	500
9.	C.P. (Marathi)	..	80	52	..	..	132
10.	Bombay	..	231	133	242	201	443
11.	Delhi	..	83	62	243	647	890
12.	Gujarat	..	2,095	101	..	..	2,196
13.	Karnatak	..	376	344	..	..	720
14.	Kerala	..	..	..	..	..	..§
15.	Maharashtra	..	408	292	..	..	700
16.	Punjab	..	50	574	50	754	804‡
17.	Sind	..	73	192	107	234	341
18.	Tamilnad	..	..	..	..	nearly	1,400

19.	U.P. ..	237	467	..	..	1,484**
20.	Utkal ..	..	..	..	..	310††
		4,862	4,441	681	1,884	15,355

*103 out of class B sent yarn spun by family members.
†Figures for 3 out of 4 Districts not received.
§No information was received even for March.
‡It is not known how many of these actually paid subscriptions.
**780 members are unclassified.
††Of these, only 116 members paid their subscriptions for April up to middle of April.

These returns are an interesting study for those who believe in the new franchise, or those who would make the Congress an effective and efficient working institution. Kerala was made a new Province at Nagpur. It gave promise of much work and greater sacrifice, but today Kerala is almost dead to the Congress call. It will not even condescend to send an explanation to the All-India Congress Committee. It has Vykom to its credit, but no person or institution can eternally live upon its credit. He who does not add to his credit loses also what he has. C.P. (Hindustani), also a new Province, and which has distinguished itself before now for its pluck, is satisfied with sending a stationary return in round figures. I suspect the figure 500. Why not 499 or 501? It has not given the classification. An explanation is necessary to show the meaning. Has there been no increase upon 500? Have there been no defaulters? Are they all self-spinning members? Or, have they all sent yarn spun by others? If not, in what way have they sent their quota? Or, has the Congress taken up the agency for those who wanted to become members and purchased yarn for them in order to save the members the trouble of buying and examining the yarn? If the Congress has taken up the agency, on what terms has it done so? These are the questions to which one would fain have answers. Andhra has a record wholly unworthy of its past traditions, because, I presume, it is torn with internal dissensions, and therefore, its capacity for growth has become paralysed. Tamilnad fares no better. It could easily make a much braver show if it could but settle its eternal Brahmin-non-Brahmin controversy. The condition, however, does not daunt me. I am a hardened criminal, slow to reform. The black picture I have drawn is for me a reason not for altering the franchise, but for adhering to it;

not for watering it down, but for strengthening its main purpose. I can see no way of making the Congress a truly national organization, responsive to national want and representative of the masses and capable of action at a given moment, without discipline, without the co-operation of all its parts, and without a due sense of responsibility in every member. 15,000 members are more than enough for the national purpose, if they would be true to their creed and satisfy all self-imposed tests. All the observations that I have made and I am making about this incessant travelling to which I have subjected myself convince me of the necessity of making Congress predominantly a self-spinning association. Nothing but this very simple discipline will cure the nation of the lethargy that has overtaken it.

Young India, 28-5-1925

89. RYOTS' CRY

As my Bengal tour progresses, the addresses I receive are becoming more and more businesslike. Instead of containing praises of me and my work, they are becoming instructive, containing valuable information. One such address was from Tipperah Ryots' Association. It contained these pregnant sentences:[1]

Let me assure the reader that I have only omitted the usual opening and the concluding brief one-sentence paragraphs and half a sentence of unnecessary epithets. I am prepared to believe that there is exaggeration in the foregoing statement. But I cannot help remarking that, on the whole, it is a fair statement of the ryots' position from their own point of view. The most remarkable part in the statement is that relating to six months' unemployment. It is an echo of the other parts of the country. Many people work on their miserably small holdings for six months, and for six months they labour in factories far away from their homes. A studious reader will notice that this unemployment naturally occupies the first place in the tale of woes. It is also mainly the cause of the other troubles mentioned. If they had steady work in their own homes for the whole of the year, they would not be obliged to run to the money-lender. If

[1] Not reproduced here. The address dwelt on the plight of the food-growing and jute-producing farmers of Tipperah due to low wages, under-employment, inequitable prices for their produce, lack of drinking-water, litigation, etc., and appealed for relief.

they had anything to lay by, they would not be obliged to sell their jute at rates dictated to them. Six months' industrial employment must revolutionize their lives.

But they say they do not know spinning. They want me to tell the Congressmen to take note of the fact. I wish I could fire Congressmen with my faith in and zeal for the charkha. Of course, they should, as representatives of the people, spread themselves among them and take to them the message of the wheel. In taking that message and in inducing them to spin, they will automatically know many things about them and share their sorrows as well as their rejoicings. Congressmen may not descend upon villages as locusts upon crops, but they should approach them as loving messengers to understand their wants and to help them to better their condition. I should not be at all sorry or upset, if, after having gone there to spread spinning, they find it necessary to render some other help instead. Let them go to the villages and stay there as servants. Everyone whom I meet agrees that it is necessary to work among the villages but few actually do so. Of those who have gone to the villages the majority find the spinning-wheel the proper instrument of service. But the villages are seven hundred thousand and we have not perhaps seven hundred true village-workers in all India. The ryots' address is a rebuke and a reminder to us. It will be time to speak of swaraj when we have a respectable number of workers in the villages.

Young India, 28-5-1925

90. THE DRAWBACKS

The more I see the Bengal life the more do I realize its immense possibilities in many directions. It has given the world's greatest poet of the day. It has given two scientists[1] who are among the greatest in the world. It has singers who are hard to beat. It has painters whose art has spread from one end of India to the other.[2] It has sacrifice to its credit which even Maharashtra cannot rival. When I wrote in answer to the revolutionary friend, I had not seen with my own eyes the workers in the malarial districts, working among the people on a mere pittance. I had not actually known that there were young men who were living in such penury and want that they had con-

[1] Dr. J. C. Bose and Dr. P. C. Ray

[2] *Vide* "At It Again", 7-5-1925.

tracted diseases that were due purely to want of proper nourishment or change to a healthy climate. I have now seen such places and such men. Both men and women of Bengal have a special talent for spinning. I have watched both working at Chandpur, Chittagong, Mahajanhat, Noakhali, Comilla, Dacca and Mymensingh. Everywhere I have found their work to be on the whole superior to any I have noticed in India. They were not professional spinners, they were not even habitual spinners, for most had come to please or to honour me if not to humour me. And yet their work was not to be despised. But for want of technical skill, this talent and this sacrifice are running to waste. The majority of the spinning-wheels I saw were indifferent machines. They were either not working properly or they were so made as to make their working heavy and give not the maximum, but the minimum of revolutions of the spindle. Their yield could, therefore, be very poor. I worked at one such wheel for fully thirty minutes. My average output is 130 yards per half-hour. On this Bengal wheel it was only 30 yards. With a proper charkha it is possible easily to treble the output. It is no small gain to the nation or the individual to treble his earning in any given hour. Bengal has a very good and very cheap wheel. Khadi Pratishthan has an excellent wheel that works well and sells at rupees two and annas eight. I have not known a cheaper machine in all India of the same type. I do wish that Bengal will adopt the Pratishthan model. It is also necessary for an expert to travel to all the places where wheels are working and put the wheels in order and destroy where repair is impossible. The expert may also demonstrate the superiority of the wheel he may recommend. All this work can only be done by men who know and who will give the whole of their time and attention to khaddar work to the exclusion of every thing else. Such organization is the Khadi Pratishthan and such a specialist is Satish Babu who has given up everything for the sake of the wheel. Then there is the unwholesome competition of mixed or half khaddar with the pure. If the Congress resolutions have any weight with Congressmen, the latter at any rate can have nothing to do with mixed khaddar. I hope, therefore, that Congress organizations that are manufacturing or supporting half-khaddar will cease to do so. Half-khaddar is generally that stuff whose warp is made of mill-yarn. Now it is the warp which enables us to test the quality of yarn. And if we get into the habit of using mill-spun yarn for warp, we shall never improve the quality of hand-spun yarn and hence we shall never be able to re-establish hand-spinning

as a cottage industry, nor succeed in achieving the exclusion of foreign cloth.

Young India, 28-5-1925

91. *NATIONAL SERVICE AND PAY*

Thus writes a correspondent.[1] It is evident that he is not a constant reader of *Young India*, or else he would have noticed that I have said repeatedly that I would deem it an honour to belong to paid national service. My travelling and other such expenses stand on a different footing. I cannot charge them against the Congress without a vote. I do not travel in virtue of any resolution of the Congress or at its instance. I travel at the call of different provinces. It would be quite wrong for me to charge these expenses against the Congress or to ask the Congress to vote them. The correspondent does not know that even members of the A.I.C.C., when they attend in answer to a summon from the Congress, make no charge against it. The Congress funds would be soon exhausted if such a charge was made. But, if I became a whole-time Congress worker in the technical sense of the term, and if we had a paid national service, I should be the first to put myself on the pay list for the sake of encouraging others. Such a service we have not yet established and I have found many practical difficulties in evolving a scheme, whether for the whole of India or even for Gujarat. More than once I have been obliged to drop it no sooner than I had conceived it. The correspondent, therefore, need have no qualms of conscience in drawing pay from the Khilafat Office for work honestly done. If it be any consolation to him, let him know that the Ali Brothers did charge the Khilafat Committee travelling expenses when they travelled at its instance. Let him have the further consolation of knowing that the Khilafat Committee bore my travelling expenses twice or thrice, when I travelled with the Ali Brothers on what was regarded as mainly Khilafat work. I could even then have fallen back upon friends, but I deemed it an honour to call myself one of the Khilafat Party. If Ali Brothers do not and did not charge their personal expenses against the

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, who described himself as a Khilafat and Congress worker drawing an allowance, referring to "Notes", 30-4-1925, (Vol. XXVI, pp. 561-2) said he found himself in a fix at leaders like Gandhiji, the Ali Brothers, Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das considering it "beneath their dignity to be put on the nation's Civil list".

Khilafat Committee, it was because their obligations were larger than they could legitimately ask the Khilafat Committee to discharge. If they had, it would have been a bad precedent.

Young India, 28-5-1925

92. *NOTES*

Hakim Sahib

Hakim Sahib Ajmal Khan has sent an Urdu letter to me from Marseilles. I translate below the relevant portion:

> We left Bombay [on] 10th April and we have reached Marseilles today, 22nd April. My health was somewhat better on the way. I was sorry not to have been able to meet you before I sailed. God willing, I shall give myself the pleasure on my return. I shall feel deeply ashamed when anyone asks me about the condition of India. For what shall I be able to say except that it is wretched,—that its two great but unfortunate communities are fighting to their hearts' content among themselves. How I wish that those who are engaged in widening the gulf would have pity on India, on Asia, indeed, on their own respective communities, and would turn their faces towards the true path and would put life into the lifeless Congress. Dr. Ansari is well and seems to have benefited by the change.

Those who know the good soul will readily appreciate and share his great grief over our dissensions.

'The Siamese Twins'

It is a sign of the times that there should be people who think that as none of them is with me during my tour, there must be some rupture between me and the Ali Brothers, or the 'Siamese twins' as Maulana Mahomed Ali delights to call himself and his big brother. Some friends at Noakhali told me that many people suspected an open rupture between us. I told them that there was none and there was likely to be none, but that, if a rupture did ever take place between us, I would not be slow to advertise it as I have advertised our friendship. But I warn the reader against hoping for or expecting any such announcement, if he wishes to avoid disappointment. Friendships are not easily made, they are less easily broken. They bear much strain. The only strain they cannot stand is dishonesty or faithlessness. Let no one imagine

that the differences between Maulana Shaukat Ali and myself about Kohat have put any strain whatsoever upon our relations. It would have been a false friendship if either of us had, in order to please the other, concealed his honest opinion.

"Then why was not one of them with us?", was the natural and next question. I told the inquirers that Maulana Shaukat Ali was tied down to Bombay till he had repaired the broken barque of the Khilafat Committee and Maulana Mahomed Ali could not be spared from his two papers which were taxing him beyond his strength. Moreover, the fact is that there is not that imperative necessity today for us always to be travelling together that there was in 1920-21. On the contrary, at the present moment every available worker is required to attend to his allotted task. The programme of work is before the country. It has got to be worked. I travel as the inspector-general to see how the new franchise is working. I travel in order to test for myself the value of the new franchise. Having taken over the burden of office I can best discharge it, during this year of grace, by travelling, wherever I may be wanted, with a Mussalman friend if possible, or, even without if necessary. So far as the Hindu-Muslim question is concerned, I have had my say. I have prescribed the cure. It has been found wanting for the time being. I must now wait, watch and pray. I discharge my obligation in that respect nowadays by simply reciting and re-affirming my creed. My sole energy is being devoted to the spinning-wheel and untouchability.

Cart and Charkha

During my tour in Bengal, I meet with all kinds of ingenious arguments against the wheel from the ingenious Bengalis. Most of them have been examined in these pages. But as readers never remember what they read in journalistic literature, a journalist is always safe in repeating the same thing so long as perhaps he takes care to repeat at fair intervals. One of these friends asked me whether I propose to replace the railways with country carts, and if I did not, how I expected to replace mills with wheels. I told him that I did not propose to replace railways with carts, because I could not do so even if I wished. Three hundred million carts could not destroy distance. But I could replace mills with wheels. For railways solved the question of speed. With mills it was a question of production in which the wheel could easily compete if there were enough hands to work as there were in India. I told him that as a matter of fact a villager could

manufacture for himself sufficient cloth cheaper than mills if he did not count the value of his labour. And he did not need to do so as he would spin or even weave during his spare hours. It is remarkable how false or incomplete analogies deceive people. In the case in point, the difference between mills and railways on the one hand and wheels and country-carts on the other, is so obvious that the comparison should never have been made. But probably the friend thought I was against all machinery in every conceivable circumstance. Probably he had in mind my objections to railways stated in my *Indian Home Rule* though I have repeatedly said that I am not working out the different fundamental problems raised in that booklet.

Waste of Effort?

Another argument advanced was that the spinning-wheel was a waste of effort. It was an astounding argument advanced without any thought given to it. I showed that anything done with a purpose could not be regarded as waste of effort. The spinning-wheel was presented to the nation for giving occupation to the millions who had, at least, for four months in the year, nothing to do. I told the objector, too, that seeing that the wheel produced at least 100 yards of yarn per every half hour it could not be regarded as waste of effort. Moreover, it not only was not a waste of effort, but a sound economic proposition. For, what was required for the millions was a universal productive occupation which could be taken up during odd moments and which did not require any special talent or long course of training to learn. Such an occupation was only hand-spinning and no other.

Rise and Fall

The District of Noakhali is a promising centre of khaddar work. It had evidently much work to its credit when the khaddar movement first started. The following report of its rise and fall, handed to me at Noakhali, cannot fail to be of general interest:[1]

The moral is obvious. Workers must not lose heart. They must continue their work in the face of all odds even as a resourceful merchant does. Till khaddar becomes current coin, we must become voluntary merchants, not for personal but for

[1] The report, not reproduced here, concerned the cotton-growing district of Noakhali, with its 55,000 weavers, and in referring to the fall in khadi consumption and consequent fall in output, stressed the potentialities of production, given necessary organization, funds and workers.

the country's gain. Khaddar work must be above the shifting party-politics of the Congress. It may change its programme fifty times but never its programme of the charkha and khaddar, on which depends the fortune of the poor and dumb millions.

Fallen Sisters Spinning

At Noakhali, I was told that two fallen sisters were not only spinning, but that they were entirely supporting themselves by spinning. These were not young girls but women over forty who could no longer sell their shame but who would, but for spinning, have lived on begging. They were, therefore, strictly speaking, weaned from begging and not from their original trade. It is, however, a great thing for Noakhali to come in touch with these sisters and interest itself in their welfare. I was also told that some of them, though they had not given up their calling, had taken to spinning. I do not know if it could be considered a gain for such sisters to spin if they would not give up their calling. It may well be used to cover their shame. At the same time there is no doubt that spinning could not be recommended to them as a means of livelihood. They are used to earning so much as one to two rupees per day if not even more. They must have either weaving or even embroidery or other fancy work which would bring them a fair remuneration. It is, too, not a question that man can tackle. It must be reserved for the fair sex to rise to the occasion. Not until a woman of exceptional purity and strength of character rises and devotes herself to the task of redeeming this portion of fallen humanity will the problem of prostitution be tackled. No doubt man can do much among men who degrade themselves by enticing young women to sell themselves for their lust. Prostitution is as old as the world, but I wonder if it was ever a regular feature of town-life that it is today. In any case, time must come when humanity will rise against the curse and make prostitution a thing of the past, as it has got rid of many evil customs, however time-honoured they might have been.

Spinning in Meerut

Chaudhari Rughbeer Narayan Singh, writing from Meerut, says that though he promised at Belgaum to enlist 500 members under the new franchise, he was not able to do so within the stipulated time owing to the serious illness of his brother who, I am sorry to report, is no more. But now with the aid of Babu Jyoti Prasad, a Swarajist *vakil* and other friends, he has been able to get 647 members of whom 200 are self-spinners. This is certainly good so far as it goes. But let me remind the Chaudhariji that

he was to enlist 500 self-spinning members. I hope that he and his co-workers will bear the fact in mind and not be satisfied till Meerut has that number of self-spinners. The Chaudhariji further says that they have been organizing spinning competitions among both men and women and that these are attended by many people. On the whole, he reports that, though the progress is slow, it is steady. They have also a class for teaching spinning and carding.

SPINNING IN GOD'S NAME

Some young men of Bowringpet have sent me over 3,200 yards of yarn spun by them during seven days following the Ram Navmi. They describe the ceremony of repeating *Ramanama* during these seven days by all people, young and old. But these young men, besides taking part in that ceremony, spun simultaneously. It is an example worth copying. I know several young men who concentrate on God whilst they are spinning. Those who spin for sacrifice can surround the act with all that is noble and good. In Dacca, some musicians called on the day of my silence to entertain me with *sitar* playing. Now Monday is not merely a day of silence but it is also a day of editing. I could ill-afford, therefore, to listen to their music. But I did not want to disappoint them. I, therefore, wrote for them a message that I would spin whilst they played on the *sitar*. They readily agreed. The result was that I spun better than usual. The hand was steadier for the music. I always use a noiseless charkha. It, therefore, did not interfere with my enjoyment of the music. On the contrary it enhanced the pleasure of listening to the music and the music enhanced the pleasure of spinning. And neither interrupted my communion with God. The hand, the ear and the heart acted in perfect harmony. Let the sceptics test the experience for themselves.

INDISCIPLINE OR INDIFFERENCE?

I receive letters from various Provinces complaining that the Head Office does not get returns or answers from Districts in spite of repeated warnings and reminders. What are they to do in such a case, they ask. The ordinary answer would be "disbandment". A subordinate office that does not obey or respond to the head office is worse than useless. The new franchise tests the quality of obedience from the individual member and the sub-committees. A member's constancy is tested from month to month in that he or she has to send his or her quota of yarn from month to month. An organization is not worth much if its

members will not take the trouble of paying their subscriptions regularly. I know that the complaint about non-payment and non-attendance is as old as the Congress itself. Irregularity of payment has not crept in since the new franchise. Imagine what would happen to a firm or a government whose employees did not attend to their work regularly or majority of whose subscribers or rate-payers did not pay rates or subscriptions regularly and without call? The firm or the government would cease to function. The Congress is, or should be, more than a firm or a government. Yet its members have to be coaxed to pay their rates or subscription. How can the Congress produce the desired effect? I do not suppose that the A.I.C.C. has got its quota of yarn. I am convinced that the provincial headquarters as well as the A.I.C.C. should be absolutely firm in securing the quota. The Congress is no stronger than the strength of regularity with which the members and groups are doing their self-imposed tasks.

Sentimental Nonsense

There is sentiment that is sensible and useful, such, for instance, as love for one's country and consequent toil. There is sentiment which is nonsensical and useless. Of this latter kind is the following:[1]

I sympathize with the young graduate, but I cannot help saying the suicide he suggests is a crime. All fasting is not meritorious. The candidate for self-immolation can not only not advance swaraj by his suicide, but he would certainly retard it, if he committed the crime of self-murder. It bespeaks want of faith in oneself. I honour the determination not to seek employment under the Government. But surely, suicide is not the only alternative. If the national school in question does not support him, he has dozens of opportunities for earning an honest livelihood and supporting his parents. Has he the will to labour with his hands? I do not know a single honest and willing worker who is unable to get suitable work in a national or public organization or in a private firm. I know that national work awaits the willing through paid service of honest and industrious young men and women for its full development. The young

[1] In the letter, not reproduced here, a frustrated correspondent referred to his dilemma in choosing between non-co-operation and co-operation with Government for his family's sake, and sought Gandhiji's opinion as to the propriety of the correspondent's fasting unto death "for the salvation of the motherland and for the well-being" of his family.

man can become a weaver or a carpenter and earn fair wages He can apply to, say, the Khadi Pratishthan and if he has the requisite qualifications, he would get employment there. A young man should never give way to despondency. He should have self-confidence enough to know that real merit never goes unrewarded.

100-YEAR-OLD WHEEL

At Comilla, a charkha was shown me which was said to be hundred years old and still in working order. The present owner of the wheel is a widow over 58 years. Her mother had it from her mother-in-law. The owner became a widow at the age of 14. She has had her own and her people's cloth woven out of the yarn spun by her. She is said never to have purchased foreign cloth for herself or her people.

Young India, 28-5-1925

93. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

May 28, 1925

Addressing the gathering Mahatmaji said that he had told them one thing and he did not know whether they had heard it or not. He would speak to them one thing which they would hear by ears and he had told them something which they had heard by eyes. He had shown them practically his only message of charkha and he could not speak anything more than that. Referring to the significance of one saying, he said, that they would go to cinema and see the deliverance of actors and actresses on the screen but what significance there could be on their cinema visit if they did not try to take to heart the morals and the spirit of the play and try to translate it in their own life? There was no significance of one's utterances if one did not practise them in one's own life. So what he would say and what Dr. Naidu had said he had explained with his own hand.

Proceeding Mahatmaji said that he would be all the more sorry if he had to speak anything more than what he had shown. Before Bengal tour he did not demonstrate his message to the public but in Faridpur he had begun that. They had seen him spinning short and coarse thread and his intention was not surely to show them his thread but to impress them with his own practice so that they could imbibe it and work up to it. He was sitting

[1] The meeting was held at Harish Park in Bhowanipur in the evening. Gandhiji addressed the meeting after Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu had spoken.

amongst the citizens of Calcutta, but his heart was always with the suffering masses in the remotest villages of Bengal. He wished to mix with the masses, with the neglected poor cultivators, with down-trodden untouchables. While attending to his wheel and to the songs his heart was amongst those poor women of East Bengal who had been suffering from starvation and with those down-trodden villagers who were treated as untouchables. They died of starvation for his sake and, for their sake they did not get full meals every day. He wished to mix with them and try to discern the cause of their woes and help them in their salvation.

Referring to Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu's appeal, he said that Dr. Naidu had asked them to join and help the Swaraj Party. To him this appeal meant that they must do something for swaraj. He could only interpret it in that way. How could those youngsters present in the meeting enter the Councils? Chittaranjan might go to the Council with only a few Das Guptas with him and they had gone there. But all of those present in the meeting could not aspire for that. Once Chittaranjan Babu had told them at Faridpur to go to the villages and work with the masses. In the words of Deshbandhu he could explain his message and say that mere entrance into the Swaraj Party would be no real work. They must go to the masses and live with them if they wished to uplift them. They might give a handful of rice as a dole, but this would not infuse real life and enthusiasm in their heart.

In East Bengal many poor villagers had told him that they had to sit idle for six months in a year having no work to do. They wanted charkha to be introduced amongst them. They did not know where charkha could be had and where they could get cotton. So they must go to them with the message of charkha and educate them in plying the wheel. They must purchase khaddar produced by their poor brethren and sisters with yarn spun by them.

Mahatmaji continued, wherever they might go and travel whether in Calcutta or in Delhi or in any other city, they must always think of the poor cultivators, their heart must always be with them, expressing their gratitude which they morally owed to them. Whatever they ate was produced by these poor cultivators, whatever amenities they enjoyed in cities was the outcome of the toil of their starving brothers and sisters. They were leaders sitting at the desk and writing articles and speeches. But if they wanted to do something for the masses they must spin and put on khaddar. One sister had told him that, when she went to East Bengal, she saw people wearing khaddar, but when she came to cities, she was disappointed to see her sisters with foreign clothes on. What more painful a fact could be than this!

Alluding to an incident during his Champaran work, Mahatmaji said that, in a train his wife met a woman who had only one piece of khaddar with her. She had told his wife that she used only that piece of cloth always. When she had to bathe in the Ganges she had to do it with her body practically naked and would put on that cloth after finishing her bath. This was

a very painful fact and he expected that they would not let such occurrences recur.

Mahatmaji appealed to his sisters in a most impressive tone that, if they wished to establish *Ramaraj*, they must try to emulate Sitaji. Sita Devi never used foreign clothes, she used to spin regularly and they must spin like her.

Speaking about untouchability he said that *sanatan* dharma had nothing as untouchability. This age-honoured magnanimous religion had no scorn and spite in its fold. If they were to save this religion from decay, they must do away with this evil eating into the vitals of their religion. Gokhale had said that the whole world would look upon India as pariah because they had looked upon their brothers and sisters in the same light. He saw that this saying of Gokhale was true to every word.

Concluding his speech, Mahatmaji said that the few yards he had spun there had only advanced him on the way to swaraj by so many yards and his only prayer was that they should spin for the swaraj of Hindustan, for Deshbandhu, for the untouchables, for the Hindus, for the Mussalmans and for all other castes of Hindustan.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-5-1925

94. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

Jeth Sud 7 [May 29, 1925][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I am sorry to know that you will not be able to take up the treasurership of the Gauraksha Mandal. May I hope you will view it with sympathy.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
NAVSARI CHAMBERS
OUTRAM ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6196. Courtesy: Purushottamdas Thakurdas

[1] The postmark is "Santiniketan, May 30, '25". *Jeth Sud* 7 fell on May 29.

95. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SANTINIKETAN,
Jeth Sud 7 [May 30, 1925][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I had put off writing to you as I thought you would be coming for the Committee meeting and we would then talk about everything personally. I was not at all worried that you did not come. I had inferred from Girdhari's letter that you would definitely come.

I am constantly on the look-out for someone or other for the College[2]; but none has appealed to me. If Jugalkishore[3] comes, it would in a way solve the problem. He is without doubt a man of character. From his letters to Gidwani, I am not fully satisfied. If Gidwani thinks of coming and can come, it would be all right. For the present there is none else I can think of. I always think that it would be better if we found someone from the South.

Is it necessary to have the inaugural function of the College performed in June itself? I will be in Assam in the later part of June. Then immediately I must go to Bihar; but if it is necessary to go to Wardha directly from Assam, I shall first go there and then proceed thence to Bihar. I shall spend one month in Bihar. Ever since people have come to know about my visit to Wardha they have been asking me to visit other places also. There are letters from Nagpur, Amravati and Akola. I think it advisable to visit those places from which there are invitations. I consider it my duty to tour all the places where I am wanted during this year. If I do so, please draw up the programme for my C.P. tour and, if it is possible and convenient to you, it will be better if you accompany me.

Please let me know

1. when I should go to Wardha;
2. whether or not I should tour C.P. and
3. if I tour C.P., whether you would draw up my itinerary and accompany me.

[1] From the book, *Panchven Putra ko Bapu ke Ashirvad*, p. 36

[2] Gujarat Vidyapith

[3] Acharya Jugalkishore; joined the Vidyapith staff; later, A.I.C.C. Secretary; Minister in U.P. Government

I do not think I shall be able to go to the Ashram for several days to come. After Bengal, I have to go immediately to Bihar, C.P. and other places. I can return only after these tours are over. This means it would probably be in September.

The Working Committee did not meet as there were only three members present—Jawaharlal, Dr. Naidu and myself. Though Aney was to come, he did not. Hence we could not decide anything about Ajmer. However, if you think it advisable to come and see me in that connection, do so. We need not be perturbed about it. I am myself going to write to Arjunlalji saying that whatever he has to say, he should tell me.

I hope all of you there are in good health. I am keeping well. Today, Saturday, I am in Bolpur. I shall stay here till Monday. On Tuesday I shall go to Calcutta and from there I shall go to Darjeeling for three days. I shall send you my further programme which will be fixed today or tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2852

96. INTERVIEW WITH RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

May 30, 1925

Mr. Gandhi explained very carefully his own meaning, showing that he did not believe in the sub-divisions of castes of modern days, but believed that the division into the main vocational castes was scientifically correct. But he did believe in a vocational division of manhood in which there was no question of inferior or superior but rather of different functions being performed in the body corporate of humanity.[2]

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Bolpur on the night of May 29. He was received by C. F. Andrews, among others, and drove to Santiniketan. On arrival, he was escorted to a flower-decked room of the Poet's Santiniketan house. Gandhiji, it is reported, asked Tagore: "Why bring me to this bridal chamber?" Tagore replied with a smile: "Santiniketan, the ever-young queen of our hearts, welcomes you."

During his three-day stay, Gandhiji had talks with the Poet. No detailed report of these, however, is available. Andrews also had several interviews with Gandhiji on May 30, but reports of these are not available. Andrews appears to have conveyed to Gandhiji his views on the opium problem and the condition of the tea-plantation labourers of Assam.

[2] This sentence is from a report in *The Hindu* 1-6-1925.

The Poet doubted if even such vocational divisions, when perpetuated, led to anything else but sterility in the long run. The Poet contended that to make this depend on birth was unscientific and unnatural because in mankind nature aimed at variety and personal choice and freedom.[1]

Mr. Gandhi again explained with great earnestness and elaboration his own position. In the end the Poet asked him to explain at length his charkha and khaddar programme.

Mr. Gandhi described his own experience in East Bengal, and how the revival of spinning had already put new life into the villages there. The Poet was evidently deeply impressed because his own heart has ever been touched by the sufferings of the villagers. Mr. Gandhi explained clearly that he did not wish the educated classes to do anything else, except to spin for a very limited time every day, in order to represent in a living way, their sympathy with the poor and the oppressed, and the brotherhood of man. He asked the Poet for his own invaluable help in the great enterprise which he had undertaken. After the most cordial greeting the interview came to a close.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-6-1925

97. *MY NOTES*

Kathiawar's Contribution

The people of Kathiawar were required to contribute Rs. 20,000 for the propagation of khadi. Shri Manilal Kothari has sent me a telegram, saying that the sum has been collected. In his latest telegram he informs me that he has received from a friend Rs. 5,000 for cotton and Rs. 1,000 for distributing spinning-wheels to the poor. This together with the funds collected by me adds up to Rs. 20,000. I thank the people of Kathiawar and Shri Manilal for having made up the required sum with such speed.[2]

Prisoner Pragji Desai[3]

Shri Kalyanji, who has just returned after seeing Shri Pragji in Karachi writes:[4]

[1] This sentence is from a report in *The Hindu*, 1-6-1925.

[2] Here followed a paragraph under the caption "A Century-old Spinning-wheel", not reproduced here. Gandhiji had written in more or less identical terms under "Notes", 28-5-1925.

[3] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhiji's associate in South Africa; later, Congress worker in Gujarat

[4] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Pragji was quite comfortable in the prison and wanted Gandhiji to know that he was not the kind of prisoner he used to be in South Africa.

The suggestion here is that in South Africa he was rather sensitive, it being his first experience of imprisonment. Now he has been seasoned and so it is quite natural that he should have learnt patience.

Schools for "Antyajas" in Karachi

In the same letter Shri Kalyanji informs me that Shri Narandas has been running in Karachi four schools for *Antyajas* at his own expense, that those schools have Brahmin teachers and that, as the children are helped to clean their teeth, are given a bath and fed in the school itself, they keep quite clean. The practice of helping pupils to clean their teeth deserves to be introduced in other schools too. It is generally not realized that physical health depends in great measure on the cleanliness of one's teeth. If it were, teachers of schools where the children's teeth are not kept clean would be regarded as deserving punishment.

Holiday for Employees

Always ready to welcome anything good, I do not mind accepting it from wherever I see it. The Bible has enjoined that Sunday should be dedicated to God. Very few Christians observe that injunction in the spirit in which it was meant to be observed. But almost everywhere in the West Sunday is observed as an off day, that is, as a holiday. This practice does not reduce the output of work. On the contrary, the common experience is that the work is done better and better. A friend from Bombay, who thinks that it would be good if private firms in India followed this practice and observed one day in the week as holiday, writes:[1]

I do not know whether anyone will attach weight to my advice. But I fully support this suggestion. I have no doubt at all that if the merchants take time off and allow the same privilege to their employees, even at the risk of less work and less income in a month, both the merchants and their assistants would benefit in a number of ways. The Government departments do observe Sunday as a holiday, but we cannot say that the people have lost anything thereby. English firms are closed every Sunday, but we do not know of any loss suffered by them on that account. I have not heard of big profits made by shops which remain open from morning and do business till late in the evening, with the help of

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that private firms in the country did not give their employees even half a holiday in the week, and requested Gandhiji to write about this in *Navajivan*.

lights. The disadvantages of the practice are obvious enough. Neither the shopkeeper nor his assistants get even breathing time. Those who spend almost their whole day in the shop and are at home only when they eat and sleep cannot be regarded as householders but should be looked upon as living in their shops. They cannot look after their children, let alone give them their company. Moreover, they must have medicines daily to keep them healthy. The assistants are in a worse plight still. The proprietor attends the shop of his own free will and it is, therefore, natural that he may be able to take interest in the work then. He may even absent himself if he so desires. An assistant passes the whole day thinking "When shall I be able to leave?" No wonder, in these circumstances, he does not keep good health. Instead of this, if he gets a Sunday or any other day as an off day every week and if he has to work only for a fixed number of hours every day, he would remain contented and be more ready to regard his employer's work as his own.

Many reforms like these do not come about because no one is willing to take the lead. Even if one trader from among many gives the lead, the other traders will follow suit. If shop-assistants, too, think about the matter with some sense of responsibility and place a plan or proposal respectfully before their employers, there is a chance of its being accepted.

Franchise Reduced to Mockery

A volunteer gives expression to his feelings as follows:[1]

I have deliberately refrained from giving the name of the village or the taluka. It is in Gujarat. I state this lest someone should think that I have translated a Hindi or English letter. Since I am always outside Gujarat, touring, I only see from a distance the bright side of things. I had been telling myself that the 2,000 voters in Gujarat were hundred per cent sincere. And now I have the above letter.

I assume that the facts as reported in the letter above are true; and since generally it happens that what is true in one place will also be true in other places, how if the same state of affairs obtains elsewhere? If it does, we shall have frankly to admit the fact. Gujarat will shine with two instead of 2,000 such spinner-voters, but two lakhs of paper-soldiers in place of 20,000 will be of no service. Necessary facilities should certainly be provided

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the state of affairs in his village and the practices followed by Congress members after spinning had been made a qualification for the franchise.

but, even in spite of them and in spite of our appeals, if people are not willing to spin and give yarn, we cannot force them to do so and need not maintain their names on muster.

What would then happen to the franchise clause? As long as I attach importance to spinning and visualize no improvement in India's economic condition without it, I shall stick to it as the qualification for the franchise. Mine is the beautiful condition of the mother who hugs her child more closely to her bosom the more the others dislike and slight it. As others' ill opinion does not make a mother doubt the value or promise of her child, I too cannot entertain any doubt about the value of the franchise qualification or about the beneficial results likely to follow from the adoption of spinning. I will, therefore, cling to the spinning-wheel and advise my co-workers to do likewise.

It is also my view that we should see that spinning for social benefit does not prove costly instead of helping to make khadi less costly, that we need not flatter anyone too much and provide facilities which are expensive. If the cost of inducing others to go on spinning is greater than that of the yarn produced, such spinning serves no useful purpose. For that means that in inducing someone to spin, we give him something instead of receiving something from him. This kind of business means bankruptcy. It does not bring the benefit which spinning is supposed to do.

The experiment of spinning should be conducted on a scientific basis. This means that we should see how many truly selfless men and women spinners we get; they alone are sincere workers who, of their own accord, spin 2,000 yards of yarn and send it [to the Congress office] or, if they happen to be poor, get cotton from the Congress office and spin it and return the yarn produced.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

WITH ANDREWS AND TAGORE

WITH C. R. DAS AND MAHADEV DESAI

98. ENTERING VILLAGES

Wherever I go I observe more suffering than happiness and also discover that we ourselves are the cause of that suffering.

Most of the welcome addresses which I received in Bengal mentioned the ravages of Kalaazar and other diseases. The workers in Bengal have responded admirably to my appeal. I had asked that welcome addresses should contain information about the people's condition rather than praise of me. I find my suggestion fully acted upon in most welcome addresses and I have by now plenty of information. In some places the population is dwindling because the people have been dying of various diseases. Now to the diseases of the body has been added the curse of a plant called water-hyacinth, that plays havoc with cereal crops. I do not know its Indian name. It is said that some person unwittingly brought it from the West. From wherever it was introduced, it is to be seen stretching for miles in the waters of the Padma river. This plant destroys cereal crops. Wherever it is seen growing, the paddy crops in the fields on the banks of the river in those parts have been almost completely destroyed. The Government has of course launched measures to destroy this poisonous weed, but so far none of them is known to have proved effective.

Who will help regions suffering from such hardships? And how? Without knowing the problems of villages, no remedies can be devised. The condition will improve only when the prevailing state of ignorance in rural areas is replaced by the light of knowledge. The people do not know the rules of healthy living. They bathe in and drink from the same tank in which they clean their bodies, scrub utensils and from which cattle drink. It simply does not occur to anyone to drain away stagnant water from marshy swamps by means of a shallow canal; even if it does, it is nobody's job and, therefore, no one does it.

The people are too poor to afford wholesome and nutritious food, which they need, let alone being able to pay for medicines. Villagers, it is assumed, do not require change of air.

Some customs too are so cruel that they kill both the body and the soul. Girls of very tender age are married off! A girl of 13 becomes a mother! A seven-year-old girl becomes a widow! Some of them do not know their husbands. How can a seven-year-old girl know what a husband is?

Should we look to the Government for a remedy for this? Will a cure for these customs be found when we have swaraj; is it not, rather, that swaraj will never come till we find a cure for them?

There is, of course, one easy remedy. The educated classes should, in a spirit of humble service, go into villages and study the condition of the people. In doing so, many will fall ill and many will die. We shall find the remedy when we have learnt to bear all this. It is only then that the people will understand and adopt the remedy that has been found. I certainly believe it will be difficult, if not impossible, to convince people with arguments addressed to their reason. The people will understand only through their heart, and they alone can speak through their hearts who have won the people's confidence through service, love and sacrifice. We shall find it written on every page of the history of the world, and especially of the history of India, that the people are guided by their emotions and that reason is helpless before them. May it be that the heart always takes precedence over reason? Can it be that where reason is not purified by the Ganga, the heart is unavailing? Ravana's reason, being untouched by the heart, was of no service to him despite its command of magic, whereas Rama's, purified by the sacred influences of the heart, easily remained invincible.

The Deshbandhu says that there can be no swaraj unless the villages are properly organized. Others too say the same thing. My experiences in Bengal also teach this very lesson, that till we enter the villages we shall never know India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

99. SPINNING IN BENGAL

The first lap of my tour of Bengal has concluded without any mishap. I say "without mishap" because many of my friends had doubts whether my health would be able to stand its strain. What I saw in Bengal has surpassed my expectations and inspires hope for the future. There are big zamindars here who spin along with members of their families. Here I saw in Dinajpur and other places zamindars, lawyers, barristers, untouchables, Hindus and Muslims, all sitting together in big meetings and spinning. I saw here in Bengal hundreds of well-to-do men and women spinning beautifully. They do not spin daily, but the very fact

that so many men and women are skilled in spinning and occasionally sit down to spin pleases me. I have not seen such skill anywhere else in India. What men and women learn with effort elsewhere, I found people doing naturally here. Just as people generally have a separate dress for weddings, etc., as also separate dresses for wearing at home and in the office, so also many people have included khadi too in their wardrobe. There is hardly any other part of India in which we shall see this.

Here I did not find a climate of opposition to khadi. The No-changers and Swarajists both use khadi, some more some less. I came across only three persons who said that the spinning-wheel would not help, and they too were not leading men. Here Moderates and extremists all use khadi a little more or a little less.

No other province can beat the slivers made here. No particles of dust and wool are ever found in them. In some places cotton called *devkapas* is being used for spinning. This does not need carding at all, nor ginning. The cotton easily comes out when removed with the fingers; it is made into slivers by arranging together the fibre-lengths and then spun into the finest yarn. Another variety of cotton which is grown in the hills is of a very inferior quality. Its fibres are extremely short, and it is not smooth. This cotton certainly needs to be carded, but when that is done no particles of dust and wool remain. The standard of its carding is inferior but, since the people are accustomed to careful carding, no one does the work in a slipshod manner. The yarn too which we see in the market does not contain dust and wool particles. It is rarely of a count under ten.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

100. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SANTINIKETAN,
Jeth Sud 8 [*May 31, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND,

I have your detailed letter. I dare not do anything on my own. I am therefore sending your letter to Ramjibhai[2]. Let him read and discuss it with you and then do what you all think proper. We want somehow to fill Kathiawar with khadi and

[1] From the postmark

[2] Ramji Hansraj of Amreli

make the life of the farmers simple and happy. If you think it necessary to invite Maganlal and Lakshmidas to decide about it, you may do so.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be a month and a half more in Bengal. I have then to visit Assam.

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND UTTAMCHAND PAREKH
BARRISTER
JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 5693

101. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Jeth Sud 8 [May 31, 1925][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. If I thought of writing a long letter, I would not be able to write at all. I therefore rest content with writing this short one. I hope you have already received the bangles which were sent from Calcutta. I have bought some more in Dacca; these you will have only when I return. Mahadev, I believe, has written a long letter in reply to yours as regards Chi. Dahyabhai. If Dahyabhai wishes to take up a gainful occupation let him do so by all means. I am glad to know that he is now in good health. Ask Chi. Yashoda[2] to write to me. All the three of you should attend upon Father and share his burdens to the best of your ability. I will have to stay on in Bengal for a month more.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 23

[1] As in the source
[2] Dahyabhai's wife

102. *SPEECH AT SANTINIKETAN*[1]

May 31, 1925

I do not ask you to give up your poetry, literature or music. All I ask is that, side by side with these pursuits, you give half an hour every day to the charkha. No one has till now advanced the excuse that he does not have even half an hour to spare. The charkha will help us overcome our narrowness. Today a North Indian visiting Bengal has to tell others that he is an Indian. Bengalis living in other provinces regard themselves as foreigners. Similarly, South Indians become foreigners as soon as they set foot in North India. The charkha is the only device which makes us all feel that we are children of the same land. We have so far accomplished nothing. Let us accomplish some little thing at any rate. Boycott of foreign cloth is something which all can equally further, towards which all can contribute equally. Untouchability hurts Hindus alone; the quarrels between the Hindus and Muslims will also be over some time or other; but if there is no khadi, the whole country will remain sunk in utter poverty. In Central Africa they have a malady known as sleeping sickness. When it strikes anyone, he becomes unconscious and, after lying for months in a state of paralysis, dies at last. We also have a kind of sleeping sickness here in our own country, and the sole remedy for this sickness is the charkha.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 18-6-1925

[1] A brief report of this speech was also published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 3-6-1925.

103. INTERVIEW TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

SANTINIKETAN,
May 31, 1925

The Anglo-Indian question was gone into fully with Mahatma Gandhi on his being again interviewed by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno. At the outset Dr. Moreno pointed out the difficulties involved in Mr. Gandhi's advice as to spinning and wearing khaddar; Anglo-Indians would find such difficulties insurmountable in adopting this peculiar method of employment even assuming that the arguments in favour of khaddar as advanced by Mr. Gandhi were correct.

Mr. Gandhi admitted that it was not easy to win over an entire community, such as the Anglo-Indians were, to the way of adopting such methods of occupation, but he was prepared to exercise his patience on their behalf. He would be satisfied for the present if only the favourable mental attitude was achieved by Anglo-Indians as regards his spinning programme. Spinning was meant principally to relieve the distress of the suffering masses; spinning was the common bond of union between rich and poor and he would advise even Engishmen, resident in India and eating up the salt of India, to be true to the land of their adoption and to take to spinning.

Dr. Moreno pointed out that at present Anglo-Indians had some definite representation in the Councils, in the Assembly and in other public bodies. What would be the fate of this minority community, if swaraj should come in? What place would they occupy along with the greater communities of India?

Mr. Gandhi replied that he could foresee no disastrous consequence if the Anglo-Indians were to come in, along with the other communities. He held that the Hindu and Muslim communities should go out of their way and grant Anglo-Indians even preference in India's representative institutions, for the simple reason that they were minorities and required greater protection.

I think that I am giving undue preference to it. I alone know that I am performing what I consider to be my parental duty towards this child, irrespective of what others may say.

Dr. Moreno pointed out that Anglo-Indians at present, by virtue of long association and by their particular mode of living were eminently suited for the positions they now held in the Railways, in the Customs Service, and in other such departments of employment in India. Did "Indianization" mean the taking away of these posts from Anglo-Indians and giving them to Indians? That was a grave foreboding the Anglo-Indian had in his mind, now for some time.

Mr. Gandhi replied that the great test for all service should be efficiency. If Anglo-Indians were suited for such posts, by all means let them retain them for some time to come. When Indians would in time qualify for these posts, on the grounds of efficiency, they could not be restricted from holding them, but by that time there might be other avenues of employment that could be open for Anglo-Indians. He did not want a levelling down so far as the communities of India were concerned, it should be a levelling up. He preferred to go in a railway carriage which was propelled by a locomotive driver of a qualified European or Anglo-Indian type, such as now were to be seen, rather than have an indifferent Indian driver at the engine.

Dr. Moreno touched on the woeful condition of Anglo-Indian education and referred to the attempts sometimes made in the Legislative Councils to cut down the grants for European education, on the grounds that they were too liberal as compared to the educational grants given to other communities and the taking away of them meant social ruin for the community in the near future. Mr. Gandhi said:

There lies the mistake. I should go out of my way to placate Anglo-Indians because they are in the minority and need special protection. When the riots broke out in Bombay in which Anglo-Indians and Parsis alike were brutally assaulted, I spoke words of fire to my Indian brethren. In the unity of all parties in India, I always refer to and include Anglo-Indians, Parsis, Jews, and so forth; without these there could be no unity, except the tyranny of the great over the small. The greater communities of India, such as the Hindus and Muslims, had solemn obligations to perform towards the lesser communities.

Referring to the education of Anglo-Indians, he would say that it did not improve much their morals, for while travelling he often noticed that Anglo-Indians, instead of having the virtues of the European and Indian communities, had the vices of both. The worst expressions of abuse in the Indian vocabulary and the vilest words of the English language were mingled in their common speech. Such depraved tastes had to be rectified by the Anglo-Indians themselves. The reason why this still continued with the community was because they isolated themselves and had ceased to assimilate what was best in their neighbours. On railway platforms he had even noticed that their physical tastes were becoming depraved; and stealthily they would purchase and consume unnoticed the most unwholesome trash exhibited for sale in the way of foodstuffs. The physical taste was an index of the mental taste.

Dr. Moreno pointed out that it was a patent fact that up to now Anglo-Indians had taken little or no interest in Congress activities. During the time of Surendranath Banerjea's leadership of Bengal, Dr. J. R. Wallace, the then leader of the community, was invited to join the Congress, but when

this idea spread in the community Dr. Wallace was ostracized for some time.

We should welcome you in the Congress. Why do you not come in? Whose fault is it, if you stand outside? I for one would welcome you with outstretched arms, as I would welcome the Jews or Parsis. The Congress is no true national institution if it does not embrace all parties.

As regards the yarn franchise Anglo-Indians could get over the difficulty, as others at present did, by purchasing yarn locally and forwarding it on.

Dr. Moreno said there was a tendency in the community to divide itself into two classes, one leaning towards the European side, the other to the Indian side, but opinions were fast veering round.

Mr. Gandhi stated that he himself had noted the change of opinion of Anglo-Indians towards the idea of classing themselves as Indians. He gathered this from his talks with his many Anglo-Indian friends. He deprecated such a vain expression of sentiment found among certain Anglo-Indians based on a mere theorizing of the pigmentation of the skin.

The real difficulty lies when you consider the poor of your community. They are degenerating and are adopting the vices of the lowest classes of Indians, because the breach is becoming wider between them and their more affluent brethren. For the richer Anglo-Indian there is no communal problem, he is receiving more than he deserves. The problem of the poorer classes is the problem for Anglo-Indian thinker to solve. We have our problem of the untouchables. You have the same problem in another form.

He decried the false mode of existence adopted by an Anglo-Indian railway station master in South India whose friendship he enjoyed. After twenty years of service this man secured a salary of Rs. 300 a month, but as he had to live up to European standards he could not save a pice after providing for the wants of his wife and his four children and giving the family the advantages of a suitable education. This Anglo-Indian had told him that he was forced to maintain such a standard of existence, although he felt it was ruinous, simply because he knew that if he adopted any other standard, his future promotion in the railway would cease for all time.

Dr. Moreno said that he was but voicing some of the difficulties the community laboured under and sought Mr. Gandhi's advice as a true friend of India. His community was a community of the soil and had permanent interests in the country.

Mr. Gandhi said in reply that he appreciated such sentiments. The abiding interest of the Anglo-Indian community was eulogized by all Indians alike. There was little to separate the Anglo-Indian from the Indian. He was glad

that Dr.Moreno had so freely talked the matter over with him. He had seen many other Anglo-Indians as well in his travels all over the country. They came and sought his advice from time to time; scores of such Anglo-Indians came to see him privately and consulted him on all communal affairs, but though they admitted the justice of his arguments, they failed to carry them out into practice. They lacked the moral courage of action. He advised Dr. Moreno not to slacken in his mission in life, which was the only policy of future salvation to the community. He asked him not to be disconcerted by the criticisms and think and move in narrow circles. The intelligentsia of Bengal and the toiling masses of the country was a case in point.

At the conclusion of the interview Dr. Moreno asked Mr. Gandhi to allow him to ask a series of set questions affecting the Anglo-Indian community in Mr. Gandhi's paper, with a view to securing studied answers on the issues involved. Mr. Gandhi said:

I shall welcome such questions as a friend of your community, as indeed of all those who are born or resident in India. I shall be glad to do what I can do to clear the issue so that we may have a better vision of the future. After all, we are both working for a common purpose: the uplift of India, your country and mine.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-6-1925

104. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO[1]

June 1, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I am wholly unaware of many things mentioned in your letter[2].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3624

[1] G. V. Subba Rao Pantulu; General Secretary of the Congress in 1914; re-elected in 1917 but resigned

[2] This is not available.

105. LETTER TO JITENDRANATH KUSARY

June 1, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I congratulate you on the progress made by you in so few days. I hope it will continue.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JITENDRANATH KUSARY
SATYASHRAM
BAHROK P.O.
DACCA DT.

From a photostat: G.N. 7187

106. LETTER TO S. A. VAZE[1]

SANTINIKETAN,
June 1, 1925

I have carefully gone through your memorandum[2]. It is very valuable and closely reasoned. But there is a chance of its being understood to mean that you will favour if there was to be a choice legislative discrimination. So far as I can see, you will make no such choice. A statute is a difficult thing to amend. A regulation or mere practice without regulation can be easily varied. Only some of us can become judges, but how would we relish the idea of a whole class being statutorily excluded? The proposed legal bar would not affect perhaps a single Asiatic. Nevertheless it must be resisted. The formula is: no legal bar and no stiffening of the administrative distinction, but on the contrary a relaxation of administrative inequality. I know all the parties on the stage. In spite of the proverbial slimness of Smuts, he is more equitable than Hertzog or Beyer or Cresswell. I tell you these things merely to help you to make your position clearer. If, however, you are of opinion that in any event if discrimination has to be made, it must be solidified into legis-

[1] Secretary, Imperial Citizenship Association and member, Servants of India Society; worked for the benefit of Indians living abroad

[2] This is not available.

lation, I have nothing to say. Only, in that case, we must agree to differ. Even in the extreme case of Australia, when the Australian statesmen wish to become reasonable, they can do so without resort to any legislative amendment.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

107. SPEECH AT BHOWANIPUR, CALCUTTA[1]

June 2, 1925

Mr. Gandhi said that the spinning-wheel was near to his heart and he was glad to learn that it had found a place in the curriculum of the National School. He hoped that boys would apply themselves to it and become expert spinners. He expected every man, woman and child, who felt for the masses, to ply the charkha for at least half an hour a day. Mr. Gandhi declared that the charkha was the one visible link between the masses and the classes.

Mr. Gandhi also dwelt on untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity.

The Hindu, 4-6-1925

108. VYKOM

The public must not be allowed to forget the Vaikom struggle.[2] Let them understand that the satyagrahis are, at the present moment, undergoing a higher form of discipline than they were doing before. Formerly they were plying their wheels in front of a physical obstacle to their further progress. It was barred by a barricade guarded by the police. Now, as the reader is aware, the barricade has been removed, the guard withdrawn and so is the notice of prohibition. The satyagrahis are, therefore, voluntarily submitting to the self-imposed moral restraint, no doubt, in the clearly expressed hope that the *savarna* Hindus directly concerned will relent and that the Government will themselves make an

[1] Gandhiji was presented with addresses on behalf of the National School and Sevak Samiti at Bhowanipur in South Calcutta.

[2] *Ezhavas* and other backward class Hindus were not allowed access to a temple and the roads leading to it at Vykom (also spelt as Vaikom) in Travancore, now a part of Kerala State. Satyagraha was organized against this discrimination in 1924; *vide* Vol. XXIII.

early declaration that the roads are open to the so-called unapproachables as they are to every other human being and even to cats and dogs. The Hindu Government of Travancore owes the suppressed classes a double duty, the one that every humane government owes to suppressed humanity under its care, and the other, a Hindu Government owes to Hinduism, that the State will lend no countenance to an inhuman superstition that has crept into Hinduism.

So far for the State.

The *savarna* Hindus of Travancore promised, and they owe it to themselves without the necessity of any promise to me, that they would not allow any rest to the Government till the roads in question were thrown open to the 'unapproachables'. They assured me that they would hold meetings throughout Travancore showing clearly to the Government that they regarded the prohibition as inconsistent with Hinduism and intolerable. Besides holding public meetings, they were to promote a monster petition signed by *savarna* Hindus demanding the opening of the roads. I wonder if those gentlemen who gave me the assurance are keeping their promise?

And now for the 'unapproachables' miscalled. I understand that they are getting restive. They have a right to do so. I am further told that they are losing faith in satyagraha. If so, their want of faith betrays ignorance of the working of satyagraha. It is a force that works silently and apparently slowly. In reality, there is no force in the world that is so direct or so swift in working. But sometimes apparent success is more quickly attained by brute force. To earn one's living by body-labour is a method of earning it by satyagraha. A gamble on the stock-exchange or house-breaking, either of which is the reverse of satyagraha, may apparently lead to an instantaneous acquisition of wealth. But the world has by now, I presume, realized that house-breaking and gambling are no methods of earning one's livelihood and that they do harm rather than good to the gambler or the thief. The 'unapproachables' may force their way by engaging in a free fight with the superstitious *savarnas* but they will not have reformed Hinduism. Theirs will be a method of forcible conversion. But I am further told that some of them even threaten to seek shelter in Christianity, Islam or Buddhism if relief is not coming soon. Those who use the threat do not, in my humble opinion, know the meaning of religion. Religion is a matter of life and death. A man does not change religion as he changes his garments. He takes it with him beyond the grave. Nor does a man profess his

religion to oblige others. He professes a religion because he cannot do otherwise. A faithful husband loves his wife as he would love no other woman. Even her faithlessness would not wean him from his faith. The bond is more than blood-relationship. So is the religious bond if it is worth anything. It is a matter of the heart. An untouchable who lives his Hinduism in the face of persecution at the hands of those Hindus who arrogate to themselves a superior status is a better Hindu than the self-styled superior Hindu who, by the very act of claiming superiority, denies his Hinduism. Therefore, those who threaten to renounce Hinduism are, in my opinion, betraying their faith.

But the satyagrahi's course is plain. He must stand unmoved in the midst of all these cross-currents. He may not be impatient with blind orthodoxy, nor be irritated over the unbelief of the suppressed people. He must know that his suffering will melt the stoniest heart of the stoniest fanatic and that it will also be a wall of protection for the wavering *Panchama* brother who has been held under suppression for ages. He must know that relief will come when there is the least hope for it. For such is the way of that cruelly-kind Deity who insists upon testing His devotees through a fiery furnace and delights in humbling him to the dust. In his hour of distress let the satyagrahi recall to his mind the prayer of the fabled godly Elephant King who was saved only when he thought he was at his last gasp.

Anglo-Indians

I observe that some writers have laughed at the suggestion made by me to Mr. Moreno that Anglo-Indians like every other Indian should spin and wear khaddar. It is easy enough to laugh at the suggestion, but I have confidence in my remedy and I know that the ridicule will very soon give place to warm approval. As I entertain no ill will against Anglo-Indians and as my conception of swaraj provides for them just as much as any other born in India, or who have adopted India as their home, I know that Anglo-Indians will not misunderstand me in the end, even if some may do so for the time being. Not making any distinction between Indians and Indians, I have the good fortune to meet many poor-class Anglo-Indians. To live at all comfortably they must make common cause with the other poor Indians. They must share their sorrows and, so far as may be, live their lives. Surely, khaddar can be common to all, and why should they not spin side by side with the others? There is no shame in adopting that one visible universal bond of sympathy between the

poor of the land and themselves. Why should the Anglo-Indian be behindhand in identifying himself with the poorest of the land of his birth? It is the false sense of superiority which he has been taught to adopt for himself over the ordinary Indian that has really made him a comparative stranger in his own land. And he cannot possibly be assimilated with the English. It is impossible for him to regard any other country as his home. If he attempted to emigrate to any of the Colonies, he will share the same fate and the same disabilities as the ordinary Indian settler does. I have, therefore, said in all humility, but in absolute sincerity which comes from deep conviction, that he should revise his ideas of life. He should be, what in reality he is, one among the millions. He will then, having a due sense of proportion, adopt the virtues of both his parents and render an immense service to himself, to his country as also to his European parent. Occupying a position that most becomes him, he will be able to speak to Englishmen with effect and from vantage-ground of personal experience. I do not suggest, and did not suggest, to Mr. Moreno that Anglo-Indians, even the poorest among them, might be satisfied with spinning as a means of livelihood. But there is no reason whatsoever why the highest among them should not spin from the national standpoint. I have, of course, no hesitation to suggest that some of them who are poor may become accomplished weavers. It is an additional calling which those who are adapted for it may learn for the sake of earning an honest livelihood. Because those who become accomplished and artistic weavers can earn as much as forty to fifty rupees per month.

Young India, 4-6-1925

109. KHADI PRATISHTHAN

I have elsewhere dealt with the development of spinning as part of flood and famine relief. It is an experiment standing by itself. But the experience gained therein by Acharya Ray and his right-hand man, as he loves to call Satish Babu, was not to end with the experiment. They are both chemists. Their scientific minds compel them to explore the possibilities of the wheel and khaddar as a permanent supplementary industry for the Bengal agriculturists. From a small experiment it has developed into a big organization called Khadi Pratishthan. It has branches in many parts of Bengal and contemplates opening more. Its object is to manufacture and sell pure khaddar and popularize the wheel

and khaddar through publications, lantern lectures, etc. In order to give it a more stable character, it has been converted into a public trust. I have before me the trust-deed and the balance sheet. I mention these facts as I promised an inquirer at a public meeting at Pabna that I shall deal with the Pratishthan work in the pages of *Young India.* I was recommending the universal adoption in Bengal of the Pratishthan charkha as I have found it to be the best available in Bengal, and as experiments are being daily made to improve it. The inquirer in question thereupon complained of the high prices of Pratishthan khaddar. And I promised to deal with the complaint through these pages. The charge may be considered true in a sense. The idea is to manufacture khaddar on the largest scale and to introduce the wheel in every home. The authors of the trust want to make khaddar self-supporting and improve the quality of yarn. The management must work in those centres too which are not at present favourable for khaddar manufacture. Thus, it pools all the khaddar it manufactures and charges an average price. It follows, therefore, that those who operate in favourable centres only can sell khaddar cheaper than the Pratishthan. This is no matter for embarrassment for the time being, as the few centres that are manufacturing pure khaddar have their own customers who do not concern themselves with the prices. The Pratishthan sells khaddar even now at a loss but it seeks to minimize the loss. It cannot always be run on donations. I am satisfied that every attempt is being made to reduce the price of khaddar sold by the Pratishthan. It cannot be too widely known that nobody has any private interest in the Pratishthan. The main actors have their own sources of income. They have given to the Pratishthan. They take nothing from it. So far I have inspected five other organized centres of khaddar manufacture. These are the Abhoy Ashram at Comilla, Dr. Prafulla Ghosh's Ashram at Malikanda, Pravartak Sangh's at Chittagong, Satsang Ashram at Pabna and Duadando Khadi Kendra. The latter I have not seen personally, but I had the pleasure of meeting the principal workers and seeing their khaddar and wheels at Hooghly. The Pravartak Sangh has hitherto dealt in half-khaddar too. But it has now definitely decided to deal exclusively in pure khaddar so far as Chittagong is concerned. It had already started the experiment at Kutiandu, but the management made the final decision for the whole of the Chittagong District during my visit there. They have still half-khaddar at their Calcutta depot and at the head office at Chandranagar. But they are striving to do away with

half-khaddar altogether at the first opportunity. They accept the principle that it is not in the interest of the khaddar movement to deal in half-khaddar. All these activities are good. Some work is being done officially too by the Congress organizations. As a matter of fact, I regard all these organizations as Congress activities in spirit though not in name. What is, however, necessary is to co-ordinate these scattered forces and economize time, talent, labour and funds. The heads of these organizations must meet together, compare notes and evolve a joint programme of action. It must come in time. In any case, the question is whether the time can be hastened. The Khadi Pratishthan has an advantage over all in that it has men who have dedicated themselves solely to the spread of the message of the charkha. It has great organizing talent at its service. It has a celebrated name behind it. It has, therefore, limitless scope for expansion. Hence it is that I commend its activity to the whole of India in general and Bengal in particular. I invite the critics to examine it critically and demonstrate its short-comings if they discover any. I invite sympathizers to study its accounts which are an open book and help it. And I invite the indifferent to throw off their indifference and, after studying it, oppose its activities or support them. Dr. Ray has a world-wide reputation as a scientist. But the millions of his countrymen will not know him for the fine soaps he may manufacture, nor yet for the careers he has found for many a young Bengali. They will know him for the light and comfort his khaddar work may bring into their humble cottages. Let his organization be like a vast banyan tree, giving shelter to all small sister organizations that would receive help and guidance from it. The Khadi Pratishthan is more than the Chemical Works, great as they are. For the former has its roots in the country's soil. It is not a super-imposition. It requires more deliberate handling for its growth. It will evoke the best in every one of its organizers, if it is to grow into a huge national organization. May it fulfil all the expectations of which it seems to me to give promise.

Young India, 4-6-1925

110. NOTES

A Baseless Charge

I have heard the charge that the Congressmen, i.e., Swarajists killed the charkha in Bengal. It is a baseless charge. In the first place, the charkha is not killed in Bengal. In the second place, whatever set-back the movement might have received, it is not due to the Swarajists any more than it is due to any other party. Let me here acknowledge that the Swarajists have everywhere co-operated to make the charkha demonstrations a success. They have taken part in organizing them and also in spinning. Some Swarajists are out-and-out enthusiasts with their whole families. I have already written about my host in Faridpur.[1] His wife and his children were devotees of the wheel. They supply the yarn for the khaddar required for the family use. The wife of Sjt. Basant Kumar Mazumdar is also an enthusiast. She organized a big demonstration at Comilla, Jogen Babu of Dinajpur is himself a regular spinner and it was a treat to watch the whole of his family spinning dexterously. Indeed, the best spinning demonstration of the tour was at Dinajpur. I could multiply such instances. What is true is that the Swarajists do not pin their whole faith to the charkha as, say, I do. Of this they have made no secret. They would not enter the Councils if they believed wholly and solely in the constructive programme. Their position is incredibly simple. They believe in the constructive programme including the charkha. They believe, too, that without it swaraj cannot be obtained. But they also believe it to be necessary to capture the Councils and all representative or semi-representative institutions through which pressure can be exerted upon the Government. This is an honest attitude at which there can be nothing to cavil. And the Bengal Swarajists at any rate are, in my opinion, living up to their faith.

Corruption?

Whilst I am discussing the doings of the Swarajists, I would like to advert to the charge of corruption brought against them. Some distinguished public men came to me and warned me against playing into the hands of the Swarajists and urged me to use my influence to purify the political life of Bengal. I told the gentlemen

[1] *Vide* "Bengal Notes", 7-5-1925.

that I had no reason to believe the charges they were making, but that, if they would give me chapter and verse and be prepared to substantiate them, I would gladly investigate and, if I found them to be true, I should have no hesitation in denouncing the party. I told them, too, that I had heard of these charges before and that I had brought them to the notice of Deshbandhu Das who had assured me that there was no truth in them, and that, if my informants could produce names and specific charges, he, Deshbandhu, was perfectly willing to have them investigated. The gentlemen told me that the belief about corruption was common property, but that it was not always possible to give legal proof. I told them that in that case we must follow the golden rule of not believing what could not be proved. If we did not follow the rule, no public man's reputation would be safe.

After this interview I had forgotten all about the charges. Hardayal Babu, however, returned to the charge with double fury at Chandpur.[1] But I could not treat his denunciation seriously, nor did he expect me to. Although he and I belong to the same school, our methods of looking at public men and activities are different. Behind my non-co-operation there is always the keenest desire to co-operate on the slightest pretext even with the worst of opponents. To me, a very imperfect mortal, ever in need of God's grace, no one is beyond redemption. Behind Hardayal Babu's non-co-operation there is fierce distrust and disinclination for reverting to co-operation. He wants mighty signs whereas a mere gesture suffices me.

But I had the charge repeated in an unexpected quarter. I pricked up my ears and became serious. I began a little gentle inquiry. I was, however, relieved on my reaching Calcutta by Babu Nalini Sircar, the chief whip of the Swaraj Party, Babu Nirmal Chandra, Babu Kirenshekhar Ray and Babu Hirendra Nath Das Gupta coming to me and offering unasked to answer any questions I might have about the Swaraj Party's doings in any matter whatsoever. I thereupon mentioned all the charges I had heard. They were able to give me complete satisfaction about them and invited me to investigate further and even to inspect their books. But I told them that I could not possibly inspect their books unless there was more authentic information about the charges. As it was, I had nothing beyond unsupported allegations. They assured me that there was not a vestige of truth in the charge of bribery and corruption.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Hardayal Nag", before 12-5-1925.

I appeal to those who are ready to make charges to be chary of believing the stories that may be brought before them regarding their adversaries. Do we not know the Government has been badly sold by its informants? Do they not know that even Ranade[1] and Gokhale were shadowed for a long time? Do they not know what scandals were talked about the late Sir Pherozeshah[2] and even Sir Surendranath Banerjea? Even the G.O.M. was not beyond the reach of calumny. A gentleman in London once gave me such details that he at least required me to approach the great patriot whom I worshipped. Well, I did approach him with trembling and fear. I sat down at his feet and I remember the occasion as I looked into his benign face and pleadingly asked whether what was said to be could be true. It was a garret which the G.O.M. was occupying as his office in Brixton. I shall never forget the scene. I came away knowing that the charge brought against him was a simple calumny. What would happen to me if I were to believe all I have been told about the "selfishness and perfidy" of the Ali Brothers whom I believe to be above corruption and perfidy? There are enough differences to divide us, but why accentuate them by giving a ready ear to every charge of baseness brought against opponents? I find enough justification for honest differences. Let us then honour our opponents for the same honesty of purpose and patriotic motive that we claim for ourselves. One gentleman who spoke about the so-called Swarajist corruption was candid enough to tell me that in spite of it all there was no other leader in Bengal but Chittaranjan Das. There is room enough for all to serve. There is no room for jealousy when all wish to serve. I believe in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foetid and only stinks. He who trusts has never yet lost in the world. A suspicious man is lost to himself and the world. Let those who have made of non-violence a creed beware of suspecting opponents. Suspicion is of the brood of violence. Non-violence cannot but trust. I must at any rate, refuse to believe anything against anybody, much less against my honoured fellow-workers, unless I have absolute proof. But Hardayal Babu will say, "Do you want us to disbelieve the testimony of our eyes and ears?" I say, yes and no.

[1] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); social reformer and author; Judge of the Bombay High Court. *Vide* also Vol. II, p. 379.

[2] Sir Pherozeshah Merwanji Mehta (1845-1915); first Parsi to be called to the English Bar; member of Bombay Legislative Council in 1893; was associated with the Indian National Congress since its inception and became its President in 1890.

I have known people whose eyes and ears have deceived them. They see and hear only what they would like to see and hear. To these I say, "Do not believe even your eyes and ears when you have unbiassed testimony to the contrary." But there are others who have seen, heard and known, but have not been able to impart the truth to others. They must persist in their belief even though the whole world may be against them. Only before them I shall plead for a little toleration for those like me who, in spite of all their desire to see the pure truth, fail to see it in the light the others see. I am yet unconvinced about the corruption ascribed to the Swarajists. And those who believe the contrary must bear with me till they convince me.

Prefer Death to Spinning

In one of my talks with students, one of them said, "Do you know why we do not spin? There is no excitement about the wheel. Our education has unfitted us for any such work. Many of us would prefer death to spinning. Death on the gallows we can gladly embrace, but spinning is an impossibility. Give us something grand. We love romance and there is none about spinning." I told my romantic friend that there was more romance about the spinning wheel than he thought. And why did he accuse Bengal that has given India a Bose and a Ray of being purely romantic in the sense of being unpractical and dreamy? I told him that those who found some excuse or other for not spinning were really not lovers of the country. Would not a father follow even ridiculous instructions of physicians if thereby his dying child could be saved? It was common cause between my audience and me that India's millions were in a dying condition and that spinning could solve the problem of their distressful poverty. Indeed, one of the most astonishing and pleasant experiences during my Bengal tour has been the absence of resistance to spinning on the part of all parties. I have invited all my visitors to oppose spinning if they did not believe in it. But apart from the three persons whose arguments I combated the other day, I have not met with any opposition to it. And even the three who opposed me were themselves dressed in khaddar. It has been a matter of great joy to me to see big zamindars and lawyers spinning side by side with *Santhals*, and little girls and boys at spinning demonstrations which have been a regular feature in the programme at every centre I have visited. Therefore, the romantic objection had no bottom to it. Unfortunately, the ordinary student lacks application except for the sake of passing

his examination. Real love of the country should be a far greater incentive to application than the desire to gain a pass certificate. There is as much romance about solving a difficult geometrical problem or working an arithmetical sum requiring long additions and multiplication as there is about spinning. And if the Bengali boy does not plead want of romance about his examinations, he has less reason to plead it about spinning, which is as necessary for national as an examination is for individual sustenance.

China to Mediterranean

A fine old Mussalman friend met me at Mymensing and our conversation naturally turned upon khaddar. I observed that he had not khaddar on and gently asked him whether he believed in it. "Oh yes, I do." I then gave him my definition of khaddar. It was no use. "All cloth however and wherever manufactured between China and Mediterranean is khaddar for me. You see my swadeshi is not narrow," retorted the friend. In vain I tried to show that his first duty lay towards India's millions from whom he derived his livelihood, that India was well able to manufacture all the cloth for her needs and that India's teeming millions were semi-starved for want of an industry supplementary to agriculture. Like Lucy he persisted in his proposition with the fullest self-satisfaction. He had made up his mind and therefore no argument could produce any impression on him. It would have been just the same if I had told him that the English colonials, though they belonged to the same race and religion, protected their industries by imposing heavy tariffs against the sister colonies and England itself and that every man's primary and natural obligation was to serve his needy neighbour in preference to one more remote. But I had no time. The company had to break up for another appointment. As if, however, to emphasize his point and yet to show that we were friends in spite of our differences of opinion, he smilingly put a few rupees in my hands for the furtherance of my work, all the while repeating his formula "China to Mediterranean". If he ever sees these lines, let me tell him that, if many people were to follow his formula, the several thousands of Mussalman sisters who are today supplementing their husbands' earnings in Bengal by hand-spinning would be without that necessary addition to their all too slender resources.

Sindh's Apathy

A Gujarati correspondent writes to say that he observed some khaddar on the persons of Gujaratis in Karachi and that a spin-

ning class for ladies was being conducted under Mr. Ranchhod-das's management, but that there was little or no khaddar among the Sindhis themselves. He adds that beyond a few Congressmen who could be counted on one's fingers, there was to be seen hardly a Sindhi who wore khaddar in Hyderabad. This is remarkable because there are in Sind fine and honest devotees of khaddar. The reason could only be that, among the Hindus, Amils are too educated and Europeanized to believe in the simple message of the charkha, that the *bhaibandhs* are too occupied with their foreign-silk trade even to think of khaddar and that the Mussalmans of Sind are as yet too untouched by the national spirit to appreciate anything in terms of India. All honour to the few who persist in khaddar and spinning in an atmosphere so adverse as in Sind. I have little doubt that if their faith survives the present ordeal, it will infect the highly "civilized" Amils, the pre-occupied *bhaibandhs* and the non-nationalist Mussalmans.

KHADDAR IN COORG

A Correspondent writes:

> The present "Khaddar Stores" was opened only a couple of months back and we have been getting our supply of pure khaddar stuff from the Tamilnad Congress Committee's Vasthralayam at Tiruppur and already about Rs. 5,000 worth of khaddar clothes have been bought and sold. The khaddar has spread in these parts. A few months back you would not have found many among the thousands wearing this material. But now, after the session of the National Congress, you will find many in a hundred wearing pure khaddar.
>
> Already there is a good number of charkhas working. A strong committee has been formed to push on hand-spinning in this country.

Such is the happy experience of all who open new centres. But after a time they slacken. Let us hope that the reports from Coorg will be progressively good. To be so, honest organizing is all that is needed.

Young India, 4-6-1925

111. FLOOD RELIEF

It was impossible for me to visit Bengal and omit the flood area and the relief given there by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray's committee. It was a place of pilgrimage for me first because of my association with the Acharya since 1901 and secondly because of the successful manner in which he demonstrated the efficacy of the Charkha as an instrument of relief and an insurance against future distress. If the villagers were well instructed in the methods of dealing with floods and famine and were also accustomed to an occupation besides agriculture which is impossible in times of flood or famines, much time, money and labour that are generally required on such occasions could be saved. When people are taught at such times to depend upon charity for their sustenance, they lose their self-respect and also the use of their limbs. Demoralization then sets in and at last such people are reduced to a state worse than that of mere lower animals. For the latter have at least pleasure in living. The former are dead to life. I, therefore, wanted to see as much as I could with my own eyes what the charkha-mad chemist had done in the relief area.

I was taken to Bogra and thence to Talora where I met the distinguished countryman in his element. "This hut is more precious to me than the palatial Science College. I got more peace and quiet of mind here than elsewhere. And the charkha is growing on me. It gives rest to a mind distracted by study of books!" Talora is a little village where the Relief Committee has one of its centres. The committee has bought a piece of land about 20 *bighas* and erected bamboo huts with thatched roofs amid surroundings of great natural beauty. There is malaria in East Bengal which is nature's revenge for man's neglect of her laws. But East Bengal has vegetation which gives it a beauty that is hard to excel. Man has succeeded in making it malarial but not yet in robbing the land of its natural beauty.

Here in restful surroundings I learnt the whole story of the relief operations. The address presented to me would not adorn me with a single adjective. Its six typed foolscap sides are a recital of facts and figures which I propose to digest for the benefit of the reader.

The great flood overwhelmed parts of Rajshahi and Bogra districts in the September of 1922, devastating nearly 4,000 square miles of Northern Bengal. The loss was estimated at one crore

rupees. The first difficulty felt was that of organizing the Relief organization and co-ordinating the activities of Relief parties that sprang up like mushrooms. Everyone who knows anything of relief works knows that the mere will to serve for money are of no avail if the requisite knowledge and ability are wanting. By judicious handling overlapping and ignorant management were checked. The affected area was divided into fifty centres. The head of this vast organization was no other than Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose, now His Majesty's guest in the Mandalay fort. He was assisted by Dr. Indra Narayan Sen Gupta. This agency distributed food stuff to the value of Rs. 25,606 and clothing worth Rs. 55,200 besides 80,000 pieces and 75,000 old jackets and shirts. It distributed also fodder of the value Rs. 1,274 and 52 waggon-loads of straw received as gift. Ten thousand huts were constructed under its supervision. "Materials were brought to the doors of the villagers, labour charges were given to them in instalments after the previous ones were properly utilized and inspection reports submitted." Supervision was so strict that there were only three cases of defalcation of Rs. 1,500, Rs. 350 and Rs. 200 respectively. These were soon detected and money was duly realized. The construction of huts cost Rs. 1,12,755. If at Kalikapur land was to be reclaimed, embankment was a necessity. It was strictly speaking the District Board's work. But that body, being unable to shoulder the burden, the Committee built the embankment a mile long costing only Rs. 5,775 and reclaiming 6,000 *bighas* of land. Gradually, as the things settled, the Committee thought of engaging the villagers in some work if they gave them food and clothing. So they were given paddy to husk. A quantity was advanced to each distressed family which had to return husked rice to the centre appointed. Each family was entitled to retain the fixed quantity for its maintenance. There were 14 such operating centres. 20,000 mouths were fed for 4 months from these centres. Out of 50,000 maunds of paddy 27,400 maunds of rice were realized. There were no defaulters. This operation cost Rs. 43,000. Side by side with this relief medical assistance was freely given.

But this did not satisfy the Committee's ambition. It wanted to deserve the generous aid it had received from the public by doing permanent work. It wanted to make the people self-supporting and self-reliant in times of trouble. I must give the details of the introduction of spinning in the language of the address:[1]

[1] This is not reproduced here. It gave an account how spinning brought relief to famine-stricken people in Ichamargaon, Talorea, Champapur, Durgapur and Tilakpur in Bengal.

Brilliant as the results are, they are nothing compared to what they are likely to be. A stage must be reached when it will be no longer necessary to take cotton to the doors of the villagers and receive yarn from them, but when they will get cotton and sell yarn in the ordinary course, as they are doing in the Feni District in Bengal today and in several villages in the Punjab, Rajputana and elsewhere. The organization of the charkha seems to me to be so complete that I do not anticipate any difficulty in the evolution of the movement in the direction indicated.

This experiment marks, too, real progress in the Hindu-Muslim unity. A predominantly Hindu organization is helping a predominantly Mussalman population with the sole purpose of improving their economic status. It has Mussalman workers who are never made to feel that they are not as valuable as the Hindus. Indeed, by sheer ability two of them occupy the highest rank among spinners. I had the good fortune to watch 32 volunteers spinning. All spun at the rate of over 400 yards per hour but the Mussalman spinner spun 720 yards per hour. Let me note that these volunteers are paid the market wage. Satish Babu to whose genius the whole of this organization is due told me that he had found by experience that it was better to pay the wholetime voluntary workers full wages if one is to expect exact discipline from them. The wages he pays the 62 volunteers average Rs. 25 per month.

Young India, 4-6-1925

112. DRAFT OF LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT[1]

June 4, 1925

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I have your kind letters. I have shown your memorandum[2] to Mr. Gandhi who came here last evening and we have both come to the conclusion that whilst with certain necessary amendments your draft manifesto can be accepted by us personally, it has

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji on behalf of C. R. Das, and signed and despatched by the latter on June 5. Mahadev Desai has recorded, in his diary on June 4, that C. R. Das remarked to his wife: "I would have taken three days in drafting this reply. Gandhiji did it in 15 minutes."

[2] This was regarding the Commonwealth of India Bill which she had drafted.

no chance of acceptance by Mr. Shastri[1], Mr. Jinnah[2] or Pundit Malaviyaji not to speak of others who have declared themselves uncompromisingly against civil disobedience. We feel that unless there is a clear understanding among all parties on the exact terms of our demand and upon the remedy we should adopt in the event of rejection, it would be futile to put forth anything as a national demand. The other difficulty in our way is want of a clear understanding between Hindus and Mussalmans and Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. We therefore feel that at the present moment we should concentrate our attention on privately cultivating the opinion of men whose voice counts in national affairs. This I am doing to the best of my ability.

I have not wired to you any definite reply as I could not convey to you the above by wire. I am sorry I have not been able to send you anything encouraging.

Yours,

From a photostat of the draft: S.N. 10674

113. LETTER TO NISHITHNATH KUNDU

[DARJEELING,][3]
June 6, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[4]. I am now trying to discuss the thing with Deshbandhu.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

NISHITHNATH KUNDU
DIST. CONGRESS COMMITTEE
DINAJPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 8020

[1] Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); educationist and orator; President, Servants of India Society, 1915-27; member, Viceroy's Legislative Council and Council of State; Agent-General of the Indian Government in South Africa

[2] Mahomed Ali Jinnah (1879-1948); barrister and statesman; first Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947-48

[3] From the postmark

[4] This is not available.

114. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Jeth Sud 9 [June 6, 1925]

CHI. NARANDAS[1],

No news from you. I want you to send me every month your report on khadi work. It will be better still, if you send it every fortnight.

It seems you have not been able to make an inquiry about Shri. . . . Now do so quickly. There are allegations of misappropriation and adultery against him. How can you possibly make an inquiry in the matter of the allegation of adultery? With regard to this I would only ask you to go to . . . with your eyes open. Examine the accounts minutely, so that if they are found to be kept honestly I can unhesitatingly declare them to be so.

You know that I have already written in *Navajivan* about the allegations made against him.

I hope you all are keeping well.

My regards to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6292. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

115. SPEECH TO WOMEN MISSIONARIES[3]

June 6, 1925

I accepted your invitation to speak before you only in order that I may have an opportunity to explain certain things which I wanted you to understand. The movement with which the Deshbandhu and others including myself are identified is a movement for self-purification. This does not mean that it is not a political one; it is indeed very much a political movement. But what is political and what is religious? Can life be divided into such watertight compartments? The whole machine is run by one

[1] Nephew of Gandhiji

[2] Addressee's mother and wife of Khushalbhai

[3] Delivered at the School of Indian Languages, Darjeeling, conducted by Miss Rowlands, for missionaries serving in India

person from one place. If that person and that place are clean and pure, then all the activities will also be clean and pure; if they are both tainted, then all the activities will also be tainted. I am amused at such distinction of our various activities, because my experience has been different. I have never made such distinctions. The seemingly different activities are complementary and produce the sweet harmony of life. Politics separated from religion stinks, religion detached from politics is meaningless. Politics means any activity for the welfare of the people. How can anyone who seeks God remain indifferent to this benevolent activity? And since according to me God and Truth are one, I will always cherish the wish to see the rule of truth prevail even in the domain of politics.

To try to explain Jesus' teachings to the followers of Jesus is like carrying the Ganga water to Varanasi. But although I am myself not a Christian, as an humble student of the Bible, who approaches it with faith and reverence, I wish respectfully to place before you the essence of the Sermon on the Mount. If, while doing so, I do not place before you frankly my inmost thoughts, I would be unfit to address you as brothers and sisters. I remember the speech I delivered in 1916 before a conference of missionaries in Madras.[1] I had observed at that time that the missionaries were making a grave error in counting the numbers of their followers. I have absolutely no faith in the proselytizing activity that is being carried on today. It may have benefited some persons, but the benefit is of little account when compared with the harm which has followed. Religious controversy serves no purpose. God wants us to profess what we sincerely believe. There are thousands of men and women today who, though they may not have heard about the Bible or Jesus have more faith and are more godfearing than Christians who know the Bible and who talk of its Ten Commandments. Religion is no matter for words, it is the path of the brave. And my humble intelligence refuses to believe that a man becomes good when he renounces one religion and embraces another. I can cite numerous instances of Indians and Zulus who have become Christians but who know nothing of Jesus' way of love or sacrifice or his message.

In this connection, I recall the talk I had with a missionary named Mr. Murray in Johannesburg. A friend had introduced

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIII, pp. 219-25.

CENTRAL LIBRARY
me to him hoping that I would become a Christian. We went out for a walk in the course of which Mr. Murray cross-examined me by asking me a number of questions. When he had cross-examined me enough, he told me: "No, friend! I do not wish to convert you. Not only that, I will never try to convert anyone in future." I was very much pleased. He even accepted my interpretation of Jesus' teaching! Quoting from the Bible itself,[1] I had said to him: "Not he who says 'God, God' shall gain deliverance, but he who surrenders himself to God and does His will, he alone shall gain it. I am aware of my weaknesses. I am struggling against them with what strength God has given me, not with my own. Do you wish that, instead of thus struggling with my God-given strength, I should repeat parrotwise that Jesus has washed off my sins and that I have become pure?" He looked up, stopped me and said: "I understand what you say."

I am today talking to you with the same emotion with which I talked to my friend then, because I want to touch your hearts just as I wanted to touch his. Why do you want merely to count heads, why do you not go on with silent service? Will you please tell me why you wish to convert people? Should it not be enough if, by coming into contact with you, people learn to live pure and noble lives, they give up the way of untruth and darkness and take to the path of truth and light? What more do you want than that you take up a helpless child and help it to earn the means wherewith to feed and clothe it self? Is not this sufficient reward for your work? Or is it that you wish to make the person whom you serve say without conviction, "I have become a Christian"? Today we see competition and conflict among different religions for counting the number of their followers. I feel deeply ashamed of this and, when I hear of people's achievement in converting such and such a number to a particular faith, I feel that that is no achievement at all, that on the contrary it is a blasphemy against God and the self.

Your work does not end with serving people. You should identify yourselves with them. Only when you meet the poorest of the poor will you be able to render true service. In this connection I recall the words of Lord Salisbury[2] to a deputation of missionaries which waited on him. Those missionaries had arrived from China and were seeking Government protection against the Boxers. Lord Salisbury told them: "I am not unwilling to

[1] *St. Matt.* VII, 21; XXI, 28-31

[2] 1830-1903; Prime Minister of England, 1885-86, 1886-92 and 1895-1902

offer you protection. But will it do you any credit? The missionaries of old were brave. Trusting that the only true protection was God's they opposed all obstacles and sacrificed their lives. If you must go as far as China for the propagation of religion, you should seek such protection as the godfearing seek and take the risks which one would take for whom religion is one's very life-breath would take." Those were the words of an honest and practical man. You, too, if you wish to serve the people of India, should go on with your work moving about with your life in your hand. Whatever the failures or harassment you may have to face, serve them in a truly missionary spirit.

If you would breathe life into these poor people, embrace the programme which I have been placing before every Indian today and enter their lives along with it. Through no other kind of work can you fulfil the command of Jesus as well as you can through this.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-6-1925

116. INVASION IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

I have received a long letter about the struggle that is going on in the *Lad* community. The writer has made an honest attempt to provide me with lots of information and shown that all possible steps have been taken to reach a compromise. I am prepared to believe that. But my intention is not to write or suggest something about the *Lad* community but to place the thoughts provoked by it before Hindu society.

On the one hand, unification is going on for the protection of Hinduism, on the other, the weaknesses which have entered Hinduism are corroding it from within. That is to say, just as a worm in the heart of a thick log of wood goes on eating it, and, even if we put a covering on it from above or apply some solution to it, the wood will ultimately be eaten away, similarly if we do not destroy the worm that has entered the heart of Hinduism and is consuming it, no matter how much we protect it from outside, it will surely be destroyed.

In the name of preservation of the castes, the castes are being and have been intermingled. The restraints of caste have disappeared, only its excesses have endured. These restraints were intended to preserve religion, these have now become retrograde and are now corroding it. The castes should be four in number but they have become far too many. The castes having become

extinct, communities have become divided into sub-castes and, like cattle wandering about in a backyard being forced into a pen, we who are without a master have been caught up in the mesh of sub-castes and are held prisoner there. The castes gave sustenance to the people; the sub-castes have proved destructive to them. Instead of serving the Hindus or India, we have been engaged in protecting our sub-castes, that is, our shackles, and have been draining our intelligence, and our money in solving problems arising therefrom. A hunter stands in front of the foolish honeybees intent on destroying their honeycomb, while they are arguing about the control of one another's residence. When the distinction between *Visha* and *Dasha* deserves to be obliterated, how can there be any question whether *Visha* is greater or *Dasha* is greater? When the need is to unite the *Vania* community throughout India, how can there be any room for the distinctions and quarrels between *Dasha* and *Visha*, *Modh* and *Lad*, *Halari* and *Ghoghari*?

The castes came into being because of the professions, while the sub-castes subsist on account of the relationship of marriage, etc. As long as I conform to these restrictions, what does it matter if I run a wine shop, bear arms or sell canned beef from foreign lands? In spite of doing all this, I can be an honoured member of the *Vania* community. Whether I observe the principle of one-man-one-wife or flirt with many damsels is no concern of my community; and regardless of what I do, I can pass as a rich man of the community, can compose new scriptures for it and can win honour from it. It takes note of where I dine or where I marry off my son or daughter, but it will not scrutinize my conduct. As I have now returned from abroad, I cannot enter the *sanctorum* of the temple of Kanyakumari, but if I have openly been leading an adulterous life, no one can stop me from entering it!

There is no exaggeration in this picture. This is no dharma; this is the extreme limit of *adharma*. This does not mean protection of caste but its annihilation. I who am keen to preserve the caste system shall prove incapable of doing so if *adharma* is not done away with. In this travesty going by the name of caste, instead of the destruction of the excess, there is danger of caste itself being annihilated.

Now let us see how the innumerable castes can be preserved. A religion in which non-violence predominates protects castes by means of violence. A man who has broken the artificial and improper restrictions of caste is not shown his "mistake" but is instantaneously boycotted. Boycott means his harassment in every

way; his meals are stopped, no girl is offered to him in marriage, he is denied obsequies and this punishment descends even to the heirs of the boycotted man! This means leading an army to kill an ant or, to speak in the language of this age, Dyerism. By such harassment, communities of a thousand or two thousand people instead of continuing to live will perish. Destruction is desirable but destruction brought about by force is harmful. If this destruction is brought about deliberately, then alone will it provide sustenance to society.

The best remedy is that the *mahajans* of the various small communities should join together and constitute a single caste, and that this big association should merge with other associations and the four castes should become a single caste. But in the present atmosphere of weakness such a reform would be considered impossible.

That is to say following dharma is as easy as it is difficult. Just as every organization can promote the growth of dharma, individuals too can do likewise. An individual should be fearless and follow what he regards as dharma and if he is boycotted he should not worry. He should courteously welcome the three punishments of the caste and should regard them as free from compulsion. There is no benefit in giving caste dinners, very often there is in not giving them. I for one regard it a sin to give dinners after a person's death. Even if a girl cannot be found for a boy or a boy for a girl in the same community, that too need not cause worry, because it is no punishment to one who does not believe in the existence of sub-castes. There will certainly be no difficulty in getting a suitable match from the reformers of other groups if the boy or girl herself is worthy. But if there is difficulty, dharma consists in putting up with it. To a man of character and restraint these are no troubles at all. He bears with them with a composed mind. If he does not receive help from his community at the time of his death, why should it trouble him? There will be others to help. I have already written about a hearse. We can do with little help if it comes into use. And one who cannot command even that little help should engage labourers. One who is so poor as not to afford even labourers is a creature of God and he should be confident that He would send him succour from any quarter. Satyagraha consists in not being bothered by punishment. Just as satyagraha is a golden weapon with which to fight the Government, so it is to fight the caste-organization, because both the ailments are the same and hence the remedy too is the same. The remedy

against oppression is satyagraha. Satyagraha alone can preserve Hinduism or any other religion.

It is my humble advice to every lover of religion that he should keep clear of the petty squabbles of the communities and should remain devoted to his duty. His duty is to protect his religion and his country. Protection of dharma does not lie in according unjustified protection to small communities, but in leading a life of religion. Protection of religion means protection of every Hindu. The protection of every Hindu consists only in ourselves being men of character. To acquire character means to follow the vows of truth, *brahmacharya*, ahimsa, etc. To become fearless means to cease to fear any man, to trust in God and fear Him alone, to know that He is witness to all our actions and all our thoughts and to tremble even to entertain evil thoughts, to help every created being, to regard even a follower of another religion as a friend, to pass our time doing good to others, etc., etc. The existence of sub-castes can, at the present time at any rate, be considered as pardonable if their activity on the whole gives sustenance to religion and country. The caste which uses the whole world to promote its own interests will be destroyed. The caste which permits itself to be used in promoting the welfare of the world will live.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

117. IN BENGAL

I am not able to leave Bengal and Bengal will not let me go. I have already spent a month here and must spend another. A swift trip to Assam in the meantime cannot be avoided. Shri Phookan writes: "Assam has not done much. But you must give it a chance to show what it can do in the matter of khadi. Give it at least a week." Without his writing all this, I would have gone on a mere invitation because I hope for much from Assam. Moreover, Assam is so far away that one cannot go there often. But the most important reason for my going there is that perhaps few provinces have suffered as much as Assam did in 1921. Assam's crime was that it had banned opium. For that reason hundreds of youths had to go to jail and bear several other hardships. This had such a bad effect that panic spread among the people and they could not stand up fearlessly. One needs no argument for going to this province. Therefore, I promptly accepted Shri Phookan's invitation. Now I have to reach Assam by the fifteenth. I may

spend two weeks there. After that I would resume and conclude the Bengal tour. Even so a part of Bengal would remain uncovered.

I am not able to leave Bengal because I hope for much from this province. The more I come in contact with the Bengalis, the more I am fascinated by their simplicity and self-denial. Wherever I turn, I find around me youths ready to sacrifice themselves. They are full of ardour for serving the country. They are ever on the look-out for ways of serving it. Some work is going on without anyone taking note of it, because the description of it can never be interesting. Simple life in itself is interesting. The more interesting such life is, the less so is the description of it. The greatest joy lies in perfect peace. How can one describe this peace or joy ever now? How can one describe the peace and joy of a man who collects around him the village children and teaches them day after day with a father's love? Who can equal him in his joy or snatch it away from him? It grows daily because he sees how his work of teaching bears fruit. He has no thought about whether he has one pupil or many. His thoughts do not extend beyond the lesson. His work is his own and he can make or mar his own happiness.

I have a feeling that workers of this kind are found mostly in Bengal, and scattered in many places there. There is little mutual contact among them. Each one is preoccupied with his own work. I often have the honour of meeting such persons. The more I see them the less willing I am to leave the province. It is in such workers that I see the seeds of swaraj. In them lies India's hope. They don't speak, their work does.

LANGUAGE OF THE HAND

Having seen such workers I had in one of my speeches uttered, without knowing, the phrase: "the language of the hand". This meeting was held in Calcutta. I reached there in time. Many men and women were still coming in. The meeting was to begin with music, but the musician had yet to come and it would be some time before I was due to speak. I took out the case containing my *takli* which I always carry about with me for spinning with whenever I get time. I have been a poor student in working on the *takli*. I have not become as adept as I should have. Where my fault lies no one has been able to tell me. But I am not going to be defeated by the *takli* and so goes on the battle between us two. I do spin some sort of yarn. Hence I utilized this time in plying the *takli*. All the slivers I had were used up and there was still some time before I was to speak. Then I thought out what I had to say and said something like this to the audience:

Where is the need for me to speak now? Ordinary speech proceeds from the tongue and is heard by the ears. But I have been speaking with my hands and, if you had used your eyes, you would have heard it. In a speech made by the tongue, the link between the tongue and the heart may sometimes be lacking. There is something in the heart, but it is something else that is spoken. Such a flaw finds no place in the language of the hand, because it has no connexion with the heart. You may ascribe one meaning you like to the action of the hand on seeing it. The yarn spun out by the hand can never go in vain. I have spoken much with my tongue and you have heard enough with your ears. But Bengal taught me to speak with my hands. The students of Faridpur gave me my first lesson. I have not forgotten that since then I have been plying the charkha at many meetings and, as at Faridpur, I speak with my tongue too while I work on the charkha. I thus show the connexion between the tongue and the hands. I see the age of silence coming when the language of the hand will be regarded as the true language. This language, the dumb and the unlettered too can speak and the deaf, if they have eyes, can hear.

But spinning yarn is not an end in itself. By doing so I showed you that, although you have my body here, my heart dwells in the huts of Bengal's villages. Through spinning I keep in constant touch with them because I know that this yarn is the thread of life for millions of poor, struggling Indians. If we do not ply the charkha for their sake, then there will be no flesh on their bodies. If we do not spin, they will remain naked though clad, and they will remain idle though working. They must work on the charkha regarding it as Annapurna. We have to work at it as at a *yajna* to show them the way, to give them peace, and to make khadi cheap. They must work on the charkha during all their leisure hours. We should do that for half an hour a day for their sake and as a *yajna*. They won't ply the charkha if we don't. If we don't ply it, who would remove its shortcomings, who would then create a science of the charkha and who would measure its capacity? It was with our hands that it was destroyed, so by our hands must it be revived. These and many other meanings were contained in the speech I made with my hands. We have extorted enough from the poor peasants and it is our dharma to repay them by plying the charkha.

Santiniketan

And is it only one temptation that Bengal holds for me? There are many. How can I do without going to Santiniketan? I write these notes from there on a silence day. The inmates of

Santiniketan fill me with peace supreme. The girls sing sweet songs. I have talked to the poet for hours on end to my heart's content. I have understood him better, rather I would say he has begun to understand me better. His affection for me knows no limits. His elder brother, Dwijendra Nath Tagore, who is known as Borodada, has for me a father's love for a son. He totally refuses to notice my faults. In his view I have never made a mistake. [He believes that] my non-co-operation, my charkha, my being a *sanatani*, my idea of Hindu-Muslim unity and my antipathy to untouchability are all worthy things. He has made my idea of swaraj his own. A doting father does not wish to see the faults of his son; similarly Borodada does not wish to see mine. I can only notice his infatuation and his love. I can't describe it. I make efforts to be worthy of that love. He is more than eighty years of age. But he keeps himself informed about the smallest things. He knows what is going on in India. He gathers his information by making others read out to him. Both the brothers have a profound knowledge of the Vedas, etc. Both know Sanskrit. *Mantras* and *slokas* from the Upanishads and the *Gita* are ever on their lips.

There are also devotees of the charkha in Santiniketan. Some ply it regularly and some occasionally. Most of them use khadi. I hope that in this world-famous institution charkha will find a larger place.

Nandini Bala

Few Gujaratis probably know that there are some Gujarati children here. Some of their families stay here. There was one such Bhatia family and a daughter was born to them. The mother fell very ill and went off her head. So Gurudev's daughter-in-law adopted this girl and now she is bringing her up. The girl is about two and a half years old. She is Gurudev's darling. Everyone knows her as his grand-daughter. Nowadays Gurudev is resting. Since he has heart disease, doctors have forbidden all movement. He may not do even strenuous mental work. So twice or thrice a day he indulges in innocent jokes with this girl—Nandini—and tells her various types of stories. She becomes petulant if she is not told stories. She is now venting some manner of displeasure on me. She got ready to take a garland of flowers from me but now bluntly refuses to come to me. Who knows she may be avenging herself because I was talking to Gurudev during her story-time. How can one get to the bottom of a child's displeasure or a king's? If a king goes into a huff, a satyagrahi like

me knows how to deal with him. But before a child's petulance my brilliant weapon loses its lustre. Moreover silence day intervened. And so I have to leave Santiniketan without winning Nandini over. To whom can I tell this sad story of my failure?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

118. KHADI IN KATHIAWAR

From the letters I receive from Kathiawar I find that those who had undertaken to enlist farmers and members of poor classes who would spin by hand seem to have succeeded. Devchandbhai[1] is very hopeful about this. It seems the workers are succeeding in finding such families without much effort. Devchandbhai believes that many more families would come forward [for spinning] if we had more workers and were in a position to supply more slivers at half price. But the question is whether it would be better to serve the families we have already enlisted or to welcome more families than we had provided for and meet their needs. Serving these families means strengthening the intermediate agencies, improving the spinning-wheel and helping the families to improve the quality of spinning and teaching them carding, etc. I cannot offer, and hold that I have no right to offer, any advice from this distance. I consider it dangerous to give advice without regard to the changing circumstances. I, therefore, wish to place before the workers my experiences in Bengal. I find here that hardly at any place do they supply slivers [to the spinners]. In fact they are supplied nowhere except in Calcutta, instead they supply only cotton. Thousands of women-spinners ask only for cotton, which they gin with their own hands. Those who know anything about spinning will see that persons who do the ginning and carding themselves naturally earn more. Anyone who has done these things will know that it is not difficult to attend to all these processes at home. In Bengal people have still not forgotten the old days and, therefore, they readily respond to these ideas. No one can surpass the slivers available in Bengal. One will never find any particle in them. Even if everyone who spins cannot do ginning in his home, why cannot he do carding? The carding instruments here are very simple and hardly cost four to six annas. They moisten a bamboo rod and bend it, and

[1] Devchand Parekh

in many cases make the bowstring out of banana fibre. The striker, of course, they never use. Instead, they work with a finger. We may not go so far, it may not even be necessary to do so. But it is certainly necessary for those who are regular spinners to learn carding forthwith. I think it will be difficult to go on supplying slivers for ever. Another thing I observed here is that hardly anyone spins yarn of less than ten counts. The yarn available in the market is mostly of more than ten counts. Leaving out *devkapas*, the cotton here is of an inferior quality to that of our *mathia*. The implements used on this side are cheaper than ours. I wonder if cheap instruments do not ultimately prove costly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

119. A NOTE OF ADVICE

June 7, 1925

Never make a promise in haste. Having once made it, fulfil it at the cost of your life.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8735

120. LETTER TO THE EDITOR, "THE WORLD"

SABARMATI,
June 8, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] with good wishes for which I thank you. In my opinion the speculation you ask me to indulge in is a vain speculation. Who knows what the whole present is? But we all know that the whole future will be a direct result of the present. The one change needful is humility and introspection. In our arrogance we want to reform the world without reforming ourselves. "Man, know thyself" is as true today as when it was first uttered.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This is not available.

121. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JALPAIGURI

June 10, 1925

Addressing a public meeting Mr. Gandhi requested the merchants and business men to utilize their wealth and their business talent for the welfare of India. The educated classes, he said, had exclusively served India up to now. It was now the turn of the mercantile classes and masses to enter the field of constructive work before the country demanded all their business skill and farsightedness which, if they were devoted to the welfare of the country, would result in an annual saving of sixty crores of rupees, exclusion of all foreign cloth and production of khaddar enough to clothe the country. Everyone of seven hundred thousand villages in India was, in the opinion of the speaker, like a spinning and weaving mill thoroughly self-contained in the matter of machinery, labour and capital.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-6-1925

122. TALK TO VOLUNTEERS, JALPAIGURI[1]

June 10, 1925

You say there is no fun in spinning. But I ask you, is there any fun in reciting the *gayatri*? Is there any fun in reciting the *kalma*? You do it as it is a duty, as it is a sacrament. Even so, spinning is a duty and a sacrament. India is dying. It is on death-bed. And have you ever watched a dying man? Have you ever felt his feet? You find that they are cold and benumbed, though you still feel some warmth on the head and comfort yourselves that the life is not yet gone out of him. But it is ebbing away. Even so the masses of India—the feet of the Mother—are cold and palsied. If you want to save India, do it by doing the little that I ask for. I warn you. Take up the wheel betimes, or perish.

Young India, 25-6-1925

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

123. NOTES

One More Recruit

The army of my sweet-hearts is daily increasing. The princess among them is, of course, Gulnar, my deputy who was to occupy the autocratic chair in my absence as His Majesty's guest as often as I received the invitation. But the lesser stars are too numerous to mention. The latest recruit is Ranibala of Burdwan, a darling perhaps 10 years old. I dare not ask her age. I was playing with her as usual and casting furtive glances at her six heavy gold-bangles. I gently explained to her that they were too heavy a burden on her delicate little wrists and down went her hand on the bangles. "Yes, yes, give up the bangles to Mahatmaji", said her grandfather, Shyam Babu of the *Servant* fame. I thought this was generosity at somebody else's expense. "Oh, you do not know my daughter and my son-in-law. My daughter will be glad to hear that the girl has given her bangles to you and my son-in-law can well afford to do without them. He is a most generous-hearted man. He helps the poor." All the while he was speaking, he was helping Ranibala to remove the bangles and encouraging her. I must confess I was embarrassed. I was merely joking as I always do when I see little girls and jokingly create in them a distaste for much ornamentation and a desire to part with their jewellery for the sake of the poor. I tried to return the bangles. But Shyam Babu cut short all such attempt by telling me that her mother would regard it as an ill-omen to take back the bangles. I had made known my condition of acceptance, viz., that the girl should not ask for new gold bangles in the place of those given to me. She might have the beautiful snow-white conch-shell bangles if she liked. The girl and the grandfather accepted the condition. Well, whether the gift was a good omen for the family or not, I do not know. It proved one for the poor and me. For, the example proved contagious and at the ladies' meeting I addressed at Burdwan I got quite a dozen bangles and two or three pairs of ear-rings all unasked. Needless to say, these will be utilized for khaddar and charkha *prachar*[1] in Bengal. I notify to all the young girls and their parents and grand-parents that I am open to have as many sweet-hearts as would come to me on Ranibala's terms. They will be handsomer for

[1] Propagation

the thought that they gave their prized ornaments to be used for the service of the poor. Let the little girls of India treasure the proverb "handsome is that handsome does".

ELEVEN DAYS' PROGRESS

The Secretary, Satyashram school at Baherok in the course of a letter says:[1]

This is very good progress indeed. Let it not however be eleven days' wonder. We are often charged with lack of sustained energy and application. I hope that the improvement so well begun will continue. I know that a good and noiseless charkha in the hands of a competent spinner is "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever".

ANALYSIS OF COMPETITORS

The reader will be interested to learn the analysis according to provinces of the competitors who have sent in their essays on hand-spinning. Here is the list:

Andhra	4	Tamilnad	19
Gujarat	9	Bombay	4
U.P.	3	Bihar	2
Bengal	3	Maharashtra	3
Burma	1	Kerala	1
Orissa	2	Karnatak	1
Punjab	5	C.P. (Marathi)	1
Sind	1	Ceylon	1
A Gujarati, (London)	1	Anonymous	1
			62

The response made is a healthy sign of the interest that is being taken in the competition. We shall soon know the result as to quality. The examiners are busy examining the essays.

'TOO HARSH A REBUKE'

A pleader friend writes:[2]

If what the friend writes about the supposed inability to test the quality of yarn without one being a weaver or a spinning

[1] This is not reproduced here. The secretary referred to the progress made by the boys in spinning during eleven days after Gandhiji's visit.

[2] Not reproduced here. Referring to the article "Weavers' Complaint", under "Notes", 14-5-1925, the correspondent had written, *inter alia*: "I cannot agree with your remarks that the spinner whose yarn is not quite up to the mark spins indifferently or without putting his heart into it and thus deceives himself and the nation. It will be unfair to determine the sincerity of a spinning member from the quality of the yarn he has been able to spin. The defects in the yarn may be due to want of proper knowledge as to the required twist."

expert were true, my remarks might be regarded as "too harsh a rebuke". But, as a matter of fact, to distinguish weavable yarn from unweavable is a simple performance. The eye tells one whether it is even or uneven or fluffy, and a pull by the hand shows whether it is well-twisted or not. It is, therefore, not necessary for one to be a weaver to know roughly the quality of yarn spun. Moreover, a careful man will go to a weaver to have his yarn tested by him. Thousands who are spinning well are not weavers at all, but they distinguish good yarn from bad without much difficulty. It is quite likely that the yarn sent by my correspondent was received at the Ashram. But, being incessantly on the move, I would not have got it. But, henceforth, he should adopt the suggestion I have made. In the jail, we had a sample of mill-spun yarn about two yards in length given and we were called upon to spin according to the sample. Everyone who cannot judge from directions should procure a little mill-yarn of a given count and draw a thread of that count and quality. It is, perhaps, now clear why I accused spinners, who sent indifferent ropes, of "stealing merit". But to show that I did not wish to do any injustice to any spinner I hasten to admit that there must be many like the pleader friend who have sent bad yarn, because they have known no better. But these are not many for the simple reason that warnings and instructions were repeatedly issued in these pages as also separately by the A.I.K.B. during the time that yarn was being delivered to it.

Spinning in Schools

The brilliant success that has attended the introduction of spinning in the Allahabad Municipal schools has been adverted to in the columns of *Young India* already. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru now reports:

> The Municipal Boards of Lucknow, Farrukhabad, Banaras, Cawnpore and Mirzapur, and the District Boards of Jhansi, Banda, Basti and Azambag have introduced or are introducing spinning in their schools. It appears that many other local boards in U.P. are considering the matter and are communicating with the U.P., P.C.C. in regard to it.

I venture to congratulate these municipalities on their laudable resolve. A serious obstacle in the way of introducing spinning in its schools that was complained of by the municipal education department of Allahabad, in its report, was the frequency with which the wheels got out of order and want of space. With careful handling, no spinning-wheel need go out of repair. But the complaint about space is a serious handicap in all cities. I com-

mend to the attention of the school authorities the beautiful *takli*. It is carried in one's pocket. All the children can work it simultaneously. It can be used anywhere and everywhere. In the Allahabad municipal schools, for instance, there were only 334 wheels for 3,400 boys and girls to work at but of these one half remained idle for want of repair. I am sure that the wheels did not give more than 150 yards per boy or girl per 45 minutes. That means 47,250 yards daily at the most. A *takli* will not yield more than 30 yards in the same time. But all the 3,400 can work at the same time. Therefore, one would get, through the use of the *takli*, 10,200 yards per day, i.e., more than double the quantity yielded by the wheels. The *takli*, therefore, is the best spinning instrument in the long run for schools and such groups. The *takli* takes no more time to master than the wheel. I, therefore, recommend the immediate adoption of the *takli* in the Allahabad municipal schools. They may retain the charkha for individual boys who may want to give extra time to them and are anxious to turn out large quantities of yarn.

Young India, 11-6-1925

124. NOT MAN'S WORK?

Thus writes a professor:

> Personally, I have full faith in the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I fully understand that without khaddar there can be no common bond between the classes and the masses of India. And without a common bond, without feeling as one, no country can accomplish anything, much less India. Besides, I can very well understand that a success in sufficient production of khaddar is bound to result in excluding foreign cloth. Khaddar programme must be worked out to a success, if India is to achieve freedom.
>
> But I am of opinion that you have begun at the wrong end. To ask able-bodied men to sit for spinning, like women, is what appears odd in the eyes of most of the people. I quite appreciate the reflection that we, at present, are no better than women. Still, the reality is that we, all of us, can't take up the work which has been associated in our country, for centuries, with women. Again, I would have consented to shake off this acquired notion, could I be persuaded to believe that at least the female population of the country have taken up the cause of spinning and that it still requires further support from the male population. To ask men to ply the spinning-wheel, while the female folk strut about in fine foreign saris, is putting the cart before the horse. Besides, the ques-

> tion of foreign cloth in India is not so much of men's creation as of women's and therefore, I think, to press the use of the spinning-wheel and khaddar on men, instead of women, is to begin the solution at the wrong end.
>
> In my humble opinion, you should have left men alone, busy with their various sorts of political propagandas and should have taken your message direct to the women of the land. Let your great programme of charkha and khaddar be confined to women for the present and let men fight the battle of freedom with manlier weapons.

The letter was rather long. I have boiled down the argument without changing the language. It is evident the learned professor does not know the condition of the women of India. Or, he would have known that, ordinarily, men do not get the privilege or the opportunity of addressing women. It has been my good fortune, no doubt, to be able to do so to a certain extent. But, in spite of all the facilities given to me, I have not been able to reach them to the extent I have reached men. He should also know that the women cannot act without the consent of men. I can quote several instances where men have prevented women from adopting the charkha or khaddar. Thirdly, women cannot make the inventions and the changes that men can make. Had the movement of spinning been confined only to women, it would have been impossible to make the improvements that the charkha has undergone during the past four years or to organize spinning in the manner it has been. Fourthly, it is contrary to experience to say that any vocation is exclusively reserved for one sex only. Cooking is predominantly the occupation of women. But a soldier would be worthless who cannot cook his own food. The whole of the cooking in camps is necessarily and naturally done by men. Moreover, whilst women naturally cook for the household, organized cooking on a large scale is universally done by men throughout the world. Fighting is predominantly men's occupation, but Arab women fought like heroines side by side with their husbands in the early struggles of Islam. Rani of Jhansi distinguished herself for her bravery as very few men did during the Sepoy Revolt. And today in Europe we find women shining as lawyers, doctors and administrators. The clerical profession is being almost monopolized by women shorthand writers and typists. Why is spinning not a manly occupation? Why is anything that will bring about the economic and spiritual uplift of India (and spinning will according to the professor) not manly enough for men? Does not the professor know that it was a man who invented the spinning jenny? Had he not

invented it the history of mankind would have been written differently. Needle-work is essentially women's work. But the master tailors of the world are men. And it was a man who invented the sewing machine. Had Singer despised the needle, he would not have left his legacy to mankind. Had men taken care of spinning side by side with the women of India in days gone by, we would perhaps have never given up spinning as we did under pressure from the East India Company. The politician may devote himself to pure politics as much as he likes, but if we are to clothe ourselves by the joint effort of millions, the politician, the poet, the potentate, the pundit and the pauper, male or female, Hindu or Mussalman, Christian, Parsi or Jew, will have religiously to give half an hour to spinning for the sake of the country. Religion of humanity is not the exclusive prerogative of any sex or class. It is the prerogative, nay the duty, of all. The religion of Indian humanity demands half an hour's spinning at least from everyone who calls himself or herself Indian.

Young India, 11-6-1925

125. AYURVEDIC SYSTEM

Kaviraj Gananath Sen writes:

> I take this opportunity of drawing your attention to the fact that the speech you delivered when laying the foundation stone of the Ashtanga Ayurveda Vidyalaya[1] has been greatly misconstrued both by the public and by the Ayurvedic physicians of Calcutta. May I suggest that you will kindly explain that you did not mean to condemn Ayurveda itself or its conscientious votaries but only a certain section of them who lived by fraud? To me such an explanation appears to be urgently required in view of the fact that almost all Bengali papers are misinterpreting your speech and condemning us for not contradicting it.

I gladly comply with the request, the more so as it enables me to express my views about Ayurvedic medicine.

I must say at the outset that I was reluctant to perform the ceremony referred to as I was reluctant even to perform the ceremony of opening the Tibbia College by reason of the views I hold on Medicine in general as expressed in my booklet *Indian Home Rule*. Seventeen years' observation has made no material change in them. If I rewrote the book, it is just possible that I should

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Ashtanga Ayurveda Vidyalaya", 6-5-1925.

state the views in a different language. But I could no more resist the organizers of my tour than I could a bosom friend like Hakim Saheb. But I told them that my speech might prove embarrassing. Had I been absolutely hostile to the movement, I should, of course, have declined the honour at any cost. But I could reconcile myself to the performance subject to the conditions I named at the meeting. I hope that the college of which I laid the foundation and to which I understand the founder, himself a *Kaviraj*, had devoted a princely sum, will contribute to the alleviation of real suffering and make discoveries and researches in Ayurveda that will enable the poorest in the land to know and use the simple indigenous drugs and teach people to learn the laws of preventing disease rather than curing them.

My quarrel with the medical profession in general is that it ignores the soul altogether and strains at nothing in seeking merely to repair such a fragile instrument as the body. Thus ignoring the soul, the profession puts men at its mercy and contributes to the diminution of human dignity and self-control. I note with thankfulness that in the West a school of thought is rising slowly but surely which takes count of the soul in trying to repair a diseased body and which, therefore, relies less on drugs and more on nature as a powerful healing agent. My quarrel with the professors of Ayurvedic system is that many of them, if not indeed a vast majority of them, are mere quacks pretending to know much more than they actually do, arrogating to themselves an infallibility and ability to cure all diseases. These gentlemen have no humility in them. They will not study the Ayurvedic system and wrest from it the secrets which appear at present to be completely hidden from the world. They impute to Ayurveda an omnipotence which it does not possess, and in so doing they have made it a stagnant system instead of a gloriously progressive science. I know of not a single discovery or invention of any importance on the part of Ayurvedic physicians as against a brilliant array of discoveries and inventions which Western physicians and surgeons boast. In fact, Ayurvedic physicians' diagnosis, as a rule, consists in feeling the pulse which, I have known many to claim, enables them to know even whether the patient is suffering from appendicitis. Whether the science of the pulse ever enabled ancient physicians to diagnose every known disease no one can tell. But it is certain that the claim cannot be sustained at the present moment. The only thing Ayurvedic physicians can safely claim is a knowledge of some vegetable and metallic drugs of great potency which some of them succeed in administering for

disease they only guess and, therefore, often with much harm to their poor patients. The advertisements of medicine that excite animal passions add immorality to incapacity and make those who resort to these practices a real danger to society.

I know of no association of Ayruvedic physicians that protests against or endeavours to check this ceaseless flow of immorality which is sapping Indian manhood and making of many old men monsters living merely to satisfy their lust. Indeed, I have known such physicians enjoying a status of respectability in medical society. Whenever, therefore, I get an opportunity I seize it to drive the truth home to the physicians Ayurvedic and Unani and plead for truth, humility and patient research. I am a lover of all that is ancient and noble. I believe that there was a time when Ayurvedic and Unani medicine served a noble purpose and was progressive. There was a time when I actively helped these physicians and believed in them. But experience has undeceived me. I have been grieved to find arrogance and ignorance among many such physicians. It hurts me to find a noble profession being prostituted for making money. I have written this not to condemn individuals. I have merely reduced to writing the impression that has been left on my mind by a long course of observation of the practice of Ayurvedic physicians. It is no answer to say, as has been said, that Ayurvedic physicians have copied the evils I have named from their Western brethren. A wise man copies not what is bad but that which is good. Let our *Kavirajas*, *Vaidyas* and *Hakims* apply to their calling a scientific spirit that Western physicians show, let them copy the latter's humility, let them reduce themselves to poverty in investigating the indigenous drugs and let them frankly acknowledge and assimilate that part of Western medicine which they at present do not possess. Let them shun the irreligion of the Western scientists, which, in order to heal the body and in the name of science, subjects the lower animal kingdom to the hideous tortures which pass muster under the name of vivisection. Some will retort that there is warrant for vivisection in Ayurveda. If there is, I am sorry. No warrant even in the four Vedas can sanctify sacrilege.

Young India, 11-6-1925

126. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ON WAY TO NAWABGANJ,
Jeth Vad 5 [*June 11, 1925*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I was glad to know that the letter which was dictated to Chi. Manhar is with you. It is quite right that you should come for the Working Committee meeting if you feel like doing so. If I particularly want your presence I shall send for you. I am on the look-out for a principal. I shall give one month to C.P. after the 16th of July. I have letters from the Municipal Committees of Amravati and Akola. I do not know their names. We should go wherever necessary. In the first place I would like to spend a quiet week in Wardha. This should be considered a more peaceful time than even the time I spent at Darjeeling. The tour should start after this. I am definitely here up to the 16th of July. I shall leave Calcutta for Assam on the 18th. From there I shall return to Calcutta on the 2nd of July. You have spun quite a lot of yarn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2853

127. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Jeth Sud 5 [*June 11, 1925*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I get your letters regularly. I do write to you a letter every week. A reply does go to every letter received from you. When you are free from the work of the shop, I would wish you to have some peace. If you like the environment of the Ashram, you may find peace there. Both Janakibehn and Jamnalalji are very devout persons. Jamnalalji wants to give shelter to many widows. If your health is restored a little, I would like to take plenty of work from you. For that you should have steadiness.

[1] From the postmark

[2] From the postmark. The *tithi* (date) according to Vikram Calendar should be *Jeth Vad* 5, not *Jeth Sud* 5.

It will take us three months yet to return to the Ashram; perhaps more, but not less. I write this letter on board the steamer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 463. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

128. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, NAWABGANJ[1]

June 11, 1925

You all spin and wear khaddar but tell me how many of you always speak the truth and never lie?

A few boys raised their hands.

Well, now tell me how many of you occasionally happen to lie?

Two boys immediately raised their hands, then three, then four and finally, almost all.

Thank you, there will be always hope for those of you who know and own that they occasionally lie. The path of those who think they never lie is difficult. I wish both success.

Young India, 25-6-1925

129. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK[2]

I was much pleased to note that spinning has been compulsory for the past four years. I have read the remarks of the Inspector about failure of spinning. I hold totally contrary views, but I know that it is possible to make spinning absolutely self-supporting, if not profitable. To that end I venture to suggest the following:

(1) Existing teachers should be induced to learn the art and the science of spinning, on promise of a prize or even a slight increment in pay.

(2) The yarn spun by the boys should be always tested and tickets attached giving the strength and count.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

[2] This was at the Bijhari School, Upashi, in the Nawabganj District. The school was experimenting with compulsory weaving of khaddar and spinning.

(3) Boys should be encouraged to improve the quality of their yarn from day to day.

(4) Yarn should be sold to the existing spinning organizations, such for instance as Khadi Pratishthan, at agreed prices always above the price of cotton. To this end cotton may be taken from the same organization.

(5) Weaving department I do not hold as a necessity, and should be kept up only if the salary of the weaving master is earned from it. I am glad in this connection to have the promise that all foreign or mill-yarn will be henceforth dispensed with.

(6) Special attention should be paid to carding which the boys must be taught to do for themselves.

(7) The charkhas make a great deal of sound foreign to them. This must interfere with good spinning. They can be and should be made noiseless. This is possible only when the spinning master knows the science of spinning which necessarily includes a knowledge of charkha repair. When the charkhas work well, they produce a musical sound which is soothing to the ear. They can be made a positive delight to the boys, besides being a lesson in sacrifice.

I congratulate the Committee and staff on their experiment and wish them every success.

Young India, 25-6-1925

130. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Friday, Jeth Vad 6 [June 12, 1925][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. I am on the steamer today. The bangles are in Calcutta. I reach there on the 18th. After reaching there, I shall send them to you by parcel. Even if Devdas has not arrived at the Ashram, do make inquiries there as the parcel addressed to him will certainly be there. You may take it.

Dahyabhai[2] had shown his preference for agriculture and hence the advice I gave him. But if he is inclined to go abroad, I for one would not stand in his way. But there is one great difficulty for me. I would have to ask someone for the money. Someone may come forward with an offer, but we should not accept money like that as far as possible. This is the ideal. But if we cannot live up to it, there is no harm in getting assistance and

[1] As in the source

[2] Addressee's brother

going. It will take me some time to return. I shall be in Bengal till 15th July. Dahyabhai may come here and have a talk with me; or he may wait till I return to the Ashram. We must not displease him in any way. I want to meet his wishes and guide him gently. There are three ways:

1. To take up private service.
2. To take up farming.
3. To go to America for further studies.

He may do any one of these he likes. I have no objection. The fourth way is to serve the nation and take a remuneration for it. But this is not to his liking and therefore out of the question. I wonder if he likes studying medicine. There is a national college here as well as in Delhi. Tell this to Dahyabhai if he does not know about it already. The college here is considered to be good. He can study here if he wants.

I am keeping quite fit. A few days back I had a slight cold, but that was nothing serious. At every place they provide sufficient rest for me.

Write to . . .[1] regularly. That will give him satisfaction. . . .[2] is hungry for love.

Attend to Father to the best of your ability. When the wife dies and there is plenty of outside activity to attend to, it is the children who can make their father forget all his sorrow if they are devoted and attend upon him. I tell you both brother and sister this is my own experience as an obedient son of my father. I am also witness to the immense good done to children in such a case. Every moment of life I am enjoying the fruit of having served my parents as God. I write to you all this because I know that Father has a heavy burden to carry. I myself am unable to share it. I cannot find the time even to write to him. So I am passing on my responsibility also to you.

Take great care of your health. Do not worry if you have to stay longer [at the college] for your studies. Mahadev was telling me that both your brother and you are weak in spelling. Remove this defect. Whatever we learn, we must learn well. In case of doubt, consult a dictionary. Nothing else needs to be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 24-5

[1] & [2] Omissions are in the source.

131. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHOJESWAR[1]

June 12, 1925

Mahatmaji spoke in Hindi and Badshah Mia translated it in Bengali. Mahatmaji, after thanking them for the address they had given him, said that they had asked him to speak about Congress. He would comply with their expectation. He said that, if they wanted swaraj in Hindusthan, they would have to do three things. Everyone, king or peasant, rich or poor, Hindu or Mussalman, man or woman, would have to spin at least half an hour daily. Everyone should try to bring about Hindu-Mussalman unity and to remove untouchability.

Mahatmaji did not believe their assertion that there was no untouchability in Bengal as it was in other parts of India. He said that Hindu religion never taught that they should not drink water touched by *Namsudras*, barbers and washermen.

Mahatmaji next advised them to forsake evils. He asked them not to drink, and not to visit the houses of public women.

Referring to Congress work, he said that those who thought the Congress to be dead were wrong in their conclusion. Congress was not dead. Its workers had practically died. Hitherto people knew that the Congress work meant speech-making and creating excitement. But that was not the real work of this great national organization. The duty of the Congress workers was to serve people and it was the want of that spirit of silent and unostentatious service that had thrown the Congress in the background. He said, as long as there were five real workers in the Congress, it could not die. Congress had no want of work to do as long as one single man of India puts on foreign clothes.

Referring to the duties of the Congress workers, Mahatmaji said that millions of Indians were starving. Let them give them the charkha and they would be able to save their brothers.[2]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-6-1925

[1] Gandhiji was earlier presented with an address on behalf of the people of Dakshinapara.

[2] A purse of one thousand rupees was presented to Gandhiji.

132. LETTER TO C. R. DAS

[Before *June 13, 1925*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I had very happy days with you. I feel that we have come nearer each other for the communion at Darjeeling.[1]

Had a purse of only Rs. 7,000 at Jalpaiguri. This I have handed to Satish Babu with instructions to transfer it to the Charkha Committee you are appointing. At Jalpaiguri, too, I had the same experience as elsewhere. Spinners are there but nobody to organize them. There is a good girls' school here. They have about 20 wheels not one of which is passable. The poor school-mistress, though she spins fine, does not know a good charkha from a bad. The committee is unconcerned as to the condition of the charkha. This can be easily remedied if there was expert guidance. The proposed committee will supply that guidance.

I do want you to learn spinning both at the wheel and the *takli*. You can do it if you will but put your mind to it. If the Governor said, 'Spin and take what you want', you will work at the wheel for twenty-four hours and master it. Well, it is not the Governor who is saying it; but one who loves you and loves India does say: 'Spin and take swaraj.' Oh that we could do one thing of permanent value! To clothe ourselves through the wheel is not an impossible programme. The spinner whom Satish Babu promised will be with you as soon as we reach Calcutta. Do learn the thing and spin religiously for half an hour for the sake of the millions and in the name of God.[2] It will give you peace and happiness. And then when you are doing it, the young men over whom you excercise such wonderful control will also take it up. I hope fever will not worry you again.

A letter is going to Bhorlal by the same mail that will take this to you. We reach Calcutta by 18th. We are at Barisal between 14-16.

Please tell Basanti Devi to send her first quota of yarn to me. I want thirty days' collection made into strands of 100

[1] Gandhiji was with the addressee in Darjeeling, where the latter was recouping his health, for five days. For Gandhiji's account of his stay and talks with Das, *vide* "At Darjeeling", 10-7-1925.

[2] For the addressee's attempts to learn spinning, *vide* "Notes", 18-6-1925, sub-title, "Spinning in Darjeeling".

yards each nicely and neatly. Nothing but first class work will be accepted from the Mayoress of Calcutta.

With love to you all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

133. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADARIPUR[1]

June 13, 1925

It is dangerous, this association with fallen sisters, especially for young men. All that you need do is to entrust the work to your women, guiding them from a distance. The volunteers in their address asked me to tell them how they could push on their work. They are all under the vow of ahimsa, and as ahimsa is love, I can show them where they can concentrate all their energies with love as their weapon. Let them plead with the men who corrupt themselves and these women, let them open these men's eyes to the bestial, diabolical character of their offence, and wean them from their evil ways. Let them form a Ladies Volunteers League for the reclamation of fallen women and work through them. You have said in your address that Madaripur has been marked out by Government as the chief among revolutionary centres. Well, nothing short of a revolution is needed amongst the women of India to fight this evil and may Madaripur lay the foundation of that revolution.

Young India, 25-6-1925

134. SPEECH AT PUBLIC LIBRARY, MADARIPUR

June 13, 1925

In reply to the address Mahatmaji said that he was very much pleased with the address that was just presented to him and thanked the Hony. Secretary for it. He spoke very highly of the girl who took so much pains to beautify the nice bamboo casket with coloured khaddar and locally hand-spun yarn. From the synopsis supplied to him by the Secretary, he was glad to find that the Library possessed a good number of books and quite a large

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal. Gandhiji referred to the fallen sisters, some of whom were spinning in a corner of the meeting.

number of people assembled there every day to read the books, magazines and newspapers available there. He was, however, anxious to know the exact nature of the benefit they derived by going through these books, etc. Be that as it may, Mahatmaji proceeded to say that libraries had now become indispensable in our daily life. These libraries, he said, had now become a part and parcel of our existence, and it gratified him to see that this library contained all sorts of newspapers and magazines. Mahatma Gandhi then spoke on the importance of public libraries, laying special stress on the selection of books.[1] Mahatmaji again thanked the Hony. Secretary for the address and the beautiful casket presented to him and then left the hall, the Secretary leading the way to the gate.[2]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-6-1925

135. ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

A gentleman has asked me some searching questions, which, being important, I give below:[3]

If the *Antyaja* members cannot stay where the other members of the conference lodge, certainly it cannot be said that untouchability has been eradicated. Our *Antyaja* brethren should have the liberty to do all that the other four castes can do. It is their duty to refuse to stay where the *Antyaja* members cannot stay.

Second Question[4]

Just as members of other communities sit in one row with due regard for decorum, so should *Antyajas* be able to do as a matter of right. This volunteer did well when he politely got up and took another seat on being criticized by a *Vaishnava*. Good manners require that those who are in a large gathering should yield to the sentiments of the majority. If, in this particular incident, the correspondent yielded to the request of one solitary *Vaishnava*, his conduct deserves especial commendation. It is not

[1] According to a report in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 16-6-1925, Gandhiji said that "libraries should contain such books which could help the readers to become men."

[2] The Honorary Secretary requested Gandhiji to autograph the Visitors' Book. Gandhiji wrote: "I wish the institution every success."

[3] The questions are not translated here. The first question was whether at the time of the conference it was not the duty of the delegates to see that the *Antyaja* members stayed with them.

[4] It was about the seating at dinner of delegates who did not believe in untouchability.

right for us to force others to conform to our views. Our dharma is to protect and serve *Antyajas*. We should, therefore, share such of their hardships as we cannot relieve.

THIRD QUESTION[1]

When at every step we find injustice being done, we may help in stopping as much of it as we can. However we act, we are bound to do injustice in one way or another and therefore, when we must make a choice from among several courses, we should choose that which would do the least injustice.

FOURTH QUESTION[2]

Anyone who thinks or acts unworthily will find some reason for doing so. If I did not visit the *Antyaja* localities, I would not be able to meet all of them. In a public meeting they can get no opportunity of pouring out their hearts. In visiting their localities there is also the desire to stress the need for internal reform among them. The aim behind admitting *Antyajas* to public meetings is to make people accept their presence. We cannot ignore either of these aims.

Wherever, therefore, a public meeting is held from which *Antyajas* are kept out, I should adopt it as a general rule not to address it. If the incident reported by this volunteer to have taken place at Amreli[3] did take place, it is a painful thing. The thought that *Antyajas* should be prevented from attending meetings in Gaekwar's Baroda State, and that too in Amreli, is unbearable. "If the sea catches fire, how can we put it out?" I, however, realize from the example of Amreli the need for greater vigilance on my part. May God help me.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 14-6-1925

[1] It was whether Gandhiji's staying, when on a tour of Saurashtra, in places to which *Antyajas* were not admitted, was not an injustice to those of them who wanted to see him but might not have been able to attend meetings addressed by him in their quarters.

[2] The correspondent had referred to Gandhiji's practice of visiting *Antyaja* quarters and said that this gave an excuse to the conservative elements in the local population to argue that *Antyajas* need not attend the general meeting. He had mentioned, as an example, the meeting at Amreli where this had happened.

[3] A town in Kathiawar where Gandhiji received a Municipal address on April 4, 1925, and presided over the meeting of the managing committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference

136. *VIRTUES OF A VOLUNTEER*

A volunteer writes as follows:[1]

It is true that I had once thought of fixing the rate of payment for voluntary workers. I had even discussed the matter with Vallabhbhai[2] and others. But we could not come to any conclusion. We felt at that time, and do so even now, that the ideal of Bengal and Maharashtra is too high for Gujarat. We felt that it would be almost impossible to induce the workers already engaged to accept only ten rupees as honorarium. The situation, as we saw it, was that the country would then lose the services of most workers.

Rules can be framed only when certain ideals come to be generally accepted. No rules can be laid down so long as they remain unusual. Gujarat has accepted the ideal of poverty only recently. Maharashtra and Bengal accepted it thirty years ago, or even earlier than that, and many young men were trained to live according to it. Very few institutions, therefore, can be run on the basis of the ideal of extreme poverty. In Gujarat we shall have to depend for the present on individual workers. A man who is sincere in his self-denial or ideal of self-control will not give up his way merely because others do not or cannot follow it. When we have a few Gujaratis who elect to live in extreme poverty and die in the same state, many more will come forward to adopt their way of life.

For the present we should accept poverty as the ideal to be reached and act accordingly as far as we can.

The most serious obstacle in our path which we have had to face was that of my illness, which prevented me from carrying out fully the experiment of poverty in my own life. I do not at all regard my present experiment as one of living in poverty. Men ascribe the same weaknesses to others which they themselves suffer from. One shivering with cold and covered in several garments believes that the whole world needs all that clothing. One who bathes in hot water pities anyone bathing in cold water. A

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that there were different rates of honorarium for voluntary workers in Bengal and Gujarat, and requested Gandhiji to stress the need for voluntary poverty for such workers and fix a uniform rate of honorarium.

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); Congress leader of Gujarat; later became the first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

person who cannot move about without a conveyance wishes that others should also have the same facility. I am in such a pitiable state.

I naturally feel that others should get what I eat. I travel by second class, so I hesitate to tell others firmly as I used to that they should travel third. I feel the need of certain other facilities which others go without. I bear this situation, but feel sore about it. I know that this is my ignorance, or whatever it is, this is the truth. However loudly a man may speak about the things which he himself does not or cannot act upon, he can have no influence on others.

This certainly does not mean that the progress of the ideal of poverty in Gujarat is dependent on me. What I have said above is addressed to my co-workers and is a confession that I myself am unable to lead Gujarat further along this path.

What is true about me is also true about my creation—the Ashram. Its inmates strive to observe the vows of non-possession, etc. They are tried men and women who feel it an honour to live in poverty. My belief is that they do not merely pretend. Nevertheless, we have not been able to embrace simplicity and poverty to the degree that we would like to. In order, therefore, not to obstruct the progress of anyone, all have the liberty to make any experiment within their ability, with the result that there are some who cook their meals themselves. The minimum expenditure per head which anyone has been able to reach is seven rupees a month. The two or three unmarried men, who experiment in this way of living do so, we believe, at the cost of considerable suffering to themselves. Those who have not been able to go so far bear with their additional needs as something they cannot help and strive to give up as many of them as they can. It must, however, be admitted that we do much less than what we have accepted as the ideal. We have tried hard to cultivate the spirit of self-denial in the Ashram, but our efforts have not met with much success. This having been my experience, I do not have the courage to ask others to undertake far-reaching experiments.

Would it not be better, then, if I asked those who are not yet ready for the ideal of service to come forward only after they have trained themselves for it? This cannot always be done in the field of public work. Where the aim is simply to train the workers, this rule may be applied. But where the aim is the attainment of a particular object, we should get the work done without violating any moral principles through any workers we can get. One

of our aims is to educate *Antyaja* children. It would be best if we could get teachers imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice. If we do not get such teachers and if we have the funds, we may engage teachers of good character even by paying them handsomely. Similarly, it is our aim to propagate spinning and khadi. For this purpose, we may certainly employ workers of good character who cannot live in poverty, to the extent that our resources permit. In trying to gain everything, we run the risk of losing everything.

If we regard poverty as one of our ideals, it is my view, based on experience, that we shall reach it ultimately while working for the other aims.

The same argument holds good about tea, etc. It is not our aim at present to reform people's dietary habits. We should, therefore, certainly accept the services of a worker who takes tea.

We ought to exercise some discrimination about such matters. This world is a strange place. Some of us want to go through it without being caught up in all manner of enslaving concerns. To some swaraj means the rule of dharma—*Ramarajya.* They cannot tolerate violation of moral principles. For them, the path of swaraj is the path leading to *moksha*[1]. Swaraj is an important milestone on that path. They believe that without crossing it they cannot attain *moksha.* But everyone does not accept this meaning of swaraj. Even so, the swaraj they want is included in the conception of swaraj explained above and, therefore, the seekers after *moksha* are unable to forgo their co-operation. There are some others who are not interested in swaraj at all but to whom the spinning-wheel is everything. Though millionaires, they have accepted spinning as a sacred duty. They want to end the poverty of the country. Those seekers after *moksha* want to keep these last, too, with them, for the spinning-wheel is an essential part of the swaraj which they want. The seekers after *moksha* journey on, accepting whatever sacrifices people are ready to make, and thus lighten their burden in the initial stages of their journey.

I wish that no one should draw wrong conclusions from my reply. I hould be very happy to get a band of workers dedicated to poverty, I know that the coming of swaraj would be very much hastened if we had such a band of workers. Individual workers should always bear this in mind. But at the same time, we should also remember our weaknesses and shortcomings. The path we follow is the path of love. We may be strict with ourselves, but should be correspondingly liberal in our attitude to

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

others. That is the way of non-violence. Our sacrifice should never make us proud. We should not be critical of the lesser sacrifices of others. It happens sometimes that a man carrying a load of five maunds may yet be a miser about his strength while a man carrying one maund draws upon all the strength he has. Between the two, the honest worker is the one who carries one maund. Hence, instead of sitting in judgment over others, we should examine our own record, use all our strength to force sacrifices from ourselves and, banishing uncharitable thoughts, accept with love whatever sacrifices others make.

There is one question in the foregoing letter which has already been answered. Whether a public worker is rich or poor, it is our duty to see that, when we go to the villages, we do not become a burden on the villagers. We should live so as to give them the least trouble. Whatever little inconvenience we cause to them should be compensated by our services. We may demonstrate to them the methods of spinning and carding and, doing that work ourselves, add to their stock of yarn and slivers. Even in this matter, however, there is no one rule which can be followed in all places, at all times and by all persons. The villagers should never get the impression that any worker has come into their midst to have a happy time or to enjoy a picnic. There can be no absolute rule in things like this. I see that the rule that we should not let the village people exceed a certain limit in their hospitality to us is being proved right by experience.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-6-1925

137. MY DUTY

One gentleman writes:[1]

We see in this letter, for one thing, an error which most people fall into. It illustrates our fond notion that big results can be achieved by preaching to people. Actually, it has been our experience through the ages that preaching has little effect. Hundreds of sadhus preach and hundreds of Brahmins recite daily from the *Gita*, the *Bhagavata*, etc. These things have practically no effect. It is true that preaching does seem to produce an effect sometimes, but in actual fact the effect is the result of the actions

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to appeal to the people in Bengal to desist from cruelty to animals.

of the man preaching and not of his preaching. If he preaches more than what he himself puts into practice, his preaching has no effect—such is the magic power of truth. However much we try to cover it up with a gloss of words, it cannot be hidden. If I myself do not possess the strength to climb the Himalayas, but advise others to climb them, my preaching will have no effect. If, on the contrary, I simply climb them without talking about it, hundreds will follow me. A man's practice is his best precept.

Moreover, one should be fit to preach. Though I myself refrain from violence towards animals, I must admit that I am not fit enough to dissuade others from it. I know that we have a duty towards animals, but cannot make others feel it. For that I need to have far greater purity, compassion and self-control in me. Without these, I cannot have deep spiritual knowledge and, in the absence of such knowledge, I cannot find the proper language.

Without this kind of knowledge one cannot have self-confidence. I do not believe that I have the strength to persuade others to refrain from violence towards animals.

But I believe in God. I intensely yearn to serve the animal world. Man can explain his suffering, and can even try to free himself from it. Animals cannot do this. Knowing, therefore, that we have a twofold duty towards them and wishing that I had the strength to serve them, I feel ashamed that I do not have such strength; but I blame God for my weakness. Why did He not give me this strength? I constantly wrestle with Him, entreat Him. But God's will is His; He pays attention to no one's wishes, why should He to mine? It may be that He will fulfil my wishes more readily than others'. I assure the reader that when He grants me the requisite strength, I will not wait to be reminded of my duty by this correspondent. Meanwhile, my *tapascharya* will continue. May it not be that as I go on with the work to which I have devoted myself, I shall by and by get the strength to serve the animal world? I am sure I am not a miser. I have surrendered all my powers to Lord Krishna. If, therefore, I ever acquire the strength to stop violence to animals, I will not let it remain unused.

Meanwhile, there is nothing else to do but to endure what we cannot cure.

Innocent people are harassed in many parts of the world, but we do not regard it as our duty to stop their ill-treatment. Realizing that it is beyond our power to do so, we merely pray every day for the prosperity of the world and do nothing more. It is because of this helplessness that we cultivate patriotism as

one of the virtues. That patriotism, however, which is imbued with the spirit of religion does the world no harm. To seek the good of one's own country at the cost of the rest of the world is false patriotism. Just as service to one's country inspired by the spirit of religion is also service to humanity, so my service of human beings includes service to the animal-world. My reason for this belief is that my service to human beings is not incompatible with the welfare of the animal-world.

There is a false, outward show of religion in our country. We want to do impossible or futile acts of what seems to us kindness but we would not do what lies within our capacity. In the words of Dhira Bhagat[1], we steal an anvil and resolve to make amends by the gift of a needle. If we put the idea in the language of the *Gita*, we omit to do what little good we easily can by adhering to our own dharma and cherish ambitions of doing what falls within the sphere of others' dharma, *with the result that we succeed in doing nothing*. It is to explain this that I have taken the trouble to answer the letter in question and explain why I do not at present engage myself in this highest dharma of ending cruelty to animals.

We are not creators of the universe. We are not omnipotent. If we put to good use the strength we possess, it will increase of itself and we shall not then, if we are honest, fail to use it.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 14-6-1925

138. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BARISAL[2]

June 14, 1925

In a joint reply Mr. Gandhi said that, when he visited the place last time, he found Aswini Kumar Dutta, though not in the best of health, yet, alive. He was an extraordinary man, with innumerable qualities, a man who founded a number of institutions. He suffered for the country and made wonderful sacrifices.

Mr. Gandhi thought it their bounden duty to perpetuate the memory of a man of that character, but he was sorry to hear that attempts made to collect money to perpetuate his memory had not been crowned with success. He had heard with regret that sufficient funds had not been collected. He

[1] A medieval poet of Gujarat

[2] Gandhiji was presented with three addresses, by the Municipality, the Reception Committee and the Samaj Sevak Sangh. About 5,000 people attended the meeting.

recollected vividly all that he had seen at Barisal on the last occasion and regretted that the Ali Brothers were not with him this time. He was not satisfied with the charkhas, though he was pleased to hear from reports that yarns produced in the district were much better than those of other districts.

Mr Gandhi appealed to the people to follow the Belgaum Congress resolution and to show a brighter record in the near future. He was pleased to note that the question of untouchability was not so acute in Barisal as in Madras and that Hindu-Muslim relations had not reached a deplorable state.

The Hindu, 16-6-1925

139. REMARKS TO FATHER STRONG

[*June 14, 1925*]

Father Strong of the Oxford Mission had invited Gandhiji to call on them and inspect their weaving. He paid a flying visit, and Father Strong showed him over the weaving shed. Gandhiji said to him:

But this is all mill-yarn and if you use mill-yarns you do not benefit the millions, but the millionaires. Weaving cannot be a cottage industry for the millions. For them the only supplementary occupation can be spinning. According to Lord Curzon, the annual average income of an Indian was 30 rupees, according to our calculation it is 26. And if it is the average income of the masses excluding the classes, the actual would be much less. Now if by spinning you can add 10 rupees to this, would it not be a fortune to them? You may not miss 5 rupees, but to those who have nothing, 5 rupees is a fortune.

Young India, 25-6-1925

140. LETTER TO RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP

[On or before *June 15, 1925*]

I continue to hear from you from time to time. I know that we differ in our outlook upon life. I know there are as many minds as there are men. But as cold and heat cannot coexist in the same place at the same time and in the same circumstances, so can violence not coexist with non-violence at the same time and place and in the same circumstances.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

141. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

BARISAL,
June 15, 1925

DEAR PANDITJI,

I was distressed to learn from your letter of relapse and Jawahar's fever. I hope both of you were free soon after your letter and that you are both now enjoying the bracing atmosphere.

I have wired[1] to you about Khwaja[2]. He is wrong in saddling me with responsibility. But if he must, what can I say but what I should do in his place? If the Jamia breeds intolerance, it is Khwaja's fault. He is its head. It was started by the best of Mussalmans. It may be reformed, if it has become bad, but in my opinion it must not be allowed to die for want of care. It must, therefore, claim Khwaja's undivided attention if it is to prosper. He is not a mere figure-head, but he is the soul of the movement. He is also administrator. I am therefore objecting not on the ground of principle but policy, that is, in the present case, more if possible even than principle. The only way Khwaja can seek election is by finding a substitute equally efficient for the college.

Moreover I am not the only party to advise. Khwaja has to consult Hakim Saheb and Dr. Ansari if he will not also consult the Ali Brothers. They are co-trustees with him. I hope you now appreciate my difficulty. I feel that I am helping the party with all my heart. I want to help it more for my own satisfaction than for that of friends much as I prize their satisfaction.

You may show this to Khwaja if it will help him to come to an independent decision.

Yours truly,
M. K. G.

[PS.]

I hope you received my letter in reply to your first letter.[3]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This telegram is not available.

[2] A. M. Khwaja of Jamia Millia Islamia, Aligarh

[3] Gandhiji had written a postcard to Khwaja on May 23, but this is not available. Acknowledging it on May 25, Khwaja had written, *inter alia*: Pandit Motilal Nehru is pressing me to stand for the Council of States and

142. LETTER TO ANTOINETTE MIRBEL

[As at] Sabarmati,
June 15, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter.[1] But I must not encourage you to undertake what is a long and expensive journey for the mere purpose of seeing me. Nor is it necessary for you to see me for your spiritual progress. It comes through service rendered in the name of God.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

Madame Antoinette Mirbel
100 Rue Brule Maison
Lille—Nord, France

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

143. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

June 15, 1925

MY DEAR SARAT BABU,

I am glad you at once understand that another meeting could only be treated as a counter demonstration. Non-violence is love. It works silently, almost secretly. Hence the saying: the right hand knoweth not what the left is giving. Love has no play as between friends and relatives. These love one another from

---

I had asked for your orders as I had written to him that, having placed my services at your disposal for the year, I shall do nothing without your permission. Panditji met me on his way to the hills and took upon himself to secure your permission. Still I have made no announcement without hearing from you.

[1] In her letter of January 26, 1925, the addressee had introduced herself as a married woman of 36, frustrated by the bigotry, "the narrowness of the spirit" of her religion and greatly impressed by Theosophist literature. Having waited 11 years to meet her "Mastcr of Compassion", she longed to become Gandhiji's disciple and wanted Gandhiji to fix a date for her visit to the Ashram.

[2] To this Antoinette Mirbel replied on July 6. *Vide* Vol. XXVIII, "Letter to Antoinette Mirbel," 13-8-1925.

selfishness, not from enlightenment. It has play only as between opponents so called. It demands, therefore, the highest charity and all the chivalry one is capable of showing towards those who oppose or persecute one.

In the light of the above please consider and answer the following charges they brought against you yesterday after you had left.[1]

I find it impossible to believe any of the charges. You need not answer them now. You may do so when I call on you. But if you would give a categorical answer in writing, you may do so.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From the manuscript of mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

144. COMMENTS ON A LETTER[2]

[Before *June 16, 1925*]

I have much pleasure in printing the foregoing as received. Sardar Jogendra Singh has written from the depth of his heart. I value his advice. I have a vivid recollection of the conversation referred to by the Sardarji. He questions the advisability of my having entered into the agreement with the Swarajists.[3] Nine months have nearly gone by since it was entered into. But I have seen no reason to repent of the agreement. I have sacrificed no principle. The Congress is no preserve of any single individual. It is a democratic body with, in my opinion, the widest intelligent franchise the world has ever seen. For it gives statutory recognition to the dignity of labour. I wish it was the sole test. It accommodates all shades of opinion save violence and untruth. The Swarajists had a perfect right of enforcing their will by a battle of votes. I was unprepared for it; for I have known the voting power to demoralize the people, especially when the electorate has not been accustomed to use independent judg-

[1] In the source here follows a sentence, obviously by Mahadev Desai, which reads: Here follow charges about hindering even constructive work, vilifying Congress members, collecting yarn without authority, refusal to deliver Congress furniture, etc.

[2] This was written before C. R. Das's death at Darjeeling, which took place on June 16, 1925. For the text of the letter by Sardar Jogendra Singh, *vide* Appendix I.

[3] For the text of the statement, *vide* Vol. XXV, pp. 288-9.

ment. I was bound as a sane man to recognize the growing power of the Swarajists. They were willing to give the predominant place to the constructive programme. More could not be expected from them. If I had forced them to the vote, they might not only have made Council-entry the national programme, but they might, in the heat of battle, have even thrown overboard the constructive programme or relegated it to an insignificant place. So much for the principle.

In practice the agreement has largely laid to rest the acerbity between Pro-changers and No-changers. It has enabled both to work the joint programme in tolerable harmony. I witness the benefits of the pact in the South. I witness them in Bengal. I do not share the opinion that Swarajists have failed. I do not attach much importance to promises made at the hustings. It is the tacitly recognized law that like promises made at marriage, those made at election times must not be taken too seriously. Once grant the premise that Council-entry is not wholly bad, the Swarajists have nothing to be ashamed of about their achievements. They have spoken fearlessly in the Council halls; they have outvoted the Government; they have shown that the Government does not enjoy the confidence even of the electorate of its own creating; they have shown a discipline and solidarity hitherto unknown among Councillors and above all (for me at least), they have introduced khaddar in these forbidden places and have not been afraid to appear in their daily national costume which, at one time, as if we were ashamed or afraid of it, we wore only in our homes. Have not the proceedings of the Swarajists set the Government a-thinking? It is true that the latter has flouted public opinion. It is true that it has gone its way in the face of hostile votes. The Swarajists could not help it. If they had the power behind, they would have dislodged the Government and dared it to defy their vote. That power has still to come. It is coming slowly but surely. The Government knows that it dare not act against public opinion for all time. The Swarajists have made it feel more than before the weakness of its position. I have political differences with them, but their bravery, discipline, patriotism command my admiration. And I should do all in my power consistently with my principles to help and strengthen them. I remain as the head of the Congress only so long as it pleases them to keep me there. Where I cannot help, I must resolutely refuse to hinder.

For me personally, non-violent non-co-operation is creed. I heartily endorse the Sardarji's statement that Non-co-operation is

co-operation in essence and stronger than the might of armies. And if I could convert but the major part of educated India to my view, swaraj can be had without further effort. The conviction is daily growing stronger that there is no peace for India, and indeed for the world, save through non-violence. For me, therefore, the spinning-wheel is not merely a symbol of simplicity and economic freedom but it is also a symbol of peace. For if we, Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and Jews unite in achieving the universalization of the wheel in India, we shall not only have arrived at real unity and exclusion of foreign cloth, but we shall also have acquired self-confidence and organizing ability which render violence wholly unnecessary for regaining our freedom. Success of the charkha to me, therefore, means victory of non-violence, such as to serve as an object-lesson for the whole world.

The Sardarji advises the introduction of electric power in the villages side by side with the charkha. I fear he knows only a few villages of the Punjab. If he knew the life of all India, as I claim to do, he would not write of electricity with the assurance he does. In the present state of India, anything like a universal introduction of electric power in our villages is an utterly impracticable proposition. That time may come. But it will not before the charkha occupies an abiding place in every home. I am anxious, therefore, to avoid fogging the public mind by raising side or false issues and false hopes. Even if the charkha means no more than what the Sardarji says or implies, we must concentrate upon it and it alone till we have made it a success. And when through it we have made the lives of the villagers livable and have provided them with honourable and profitable work during the slack season, all the things that should be added to make them happier will follow as a matter of course. Let me assure the Sardarji that I am not against machinery as such. The charkha itself, for that matter, is machinery. But I am a determined foe of all machinery that is designed for exploitation of people.

The Sardarji need not entertain any fear of Englishmen being excluded from the circle of unity. For it includes everyone who chooses to call himself an Indian, whether by birth or adoption. It includes all denominations and all races. Nor is the combination intended to be hostile to any nation or individuals, not even a Dyer. For it seeks to convert, not to destroy.

Young India, 25-6-1925

145. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI

KHULNA,
[*June 17, 1925*]

REGARDING DELHI TROUBLE[1] WANT SAY NOTHING ON MERITS. HAVE FULLEST FAITH YOUR INTEGRITY AND GODLINESS. MAY HE GUIDE US ALL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

146. TELEGRAM TO BASANTI DEVI DAS[2]

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

BASANTI DEVI DAS
STEPASIDE
DARJEELING

MY HEART WITH YOU. MAY GOD BLESS YOU. EXPECT YOU BE BRAVE. BABY[3] MUST NOT OVERGRIEVE. REACHING CALCUTTA EVENING.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

147. TELEGRAM TO SATCOURIPATI ROY

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

UNTHINKABLE BUT GOD IS GREAT. MISSING FIRST TRAIN KEEP ESSENTIAL ENGAGEMENTS. LEAVING NOON. PRAY AWAIT ARRIVAL FINAL FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS. THINK BODY SHOULD BE RECEIVED RUSSA ROAD UNLESS FRIENDS HAVE VALID REASONS CONTRARY. NATION'S WORK MUST NOT STOP BUT ADVANCE

[1] The reference is not clear.

[2] This and the telegrams that follow were sent on the passing away of C. R. Das on June 16, at Darjeeling. Gandhiji received the news at Khulna on the following day.

[3] Mona Das

DOUBLE SPEED HIS GREAT SPIRIT NOBLE EXAMPLE GUIDING US. HOPE PARTY STRIFE WILL BE HUSHED AND ALL WILL HEARTILY JOIN. DO HONOUR MEMORY THIS IDOL OF BENGAL AND ONE OF GREATEST OF INDIA'S SERVANTS. CANCELLING ASSAM TOUR.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

148. TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

URMILA DEVI

NATURAL GRIEVE OVER DEATH LOVED ONES. BRAVE REMAIN UNPERTURBED. I WANT YOU BE BRAVE AND MAKE EVERY MAN YOUR BLOOD BROTHER. REACHING EVENING.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

149. TELEGRAM TO MONA DAS

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

MONA

BE TRUE TO FATHER AND BE BRAVE FACE IRREPARABLE LOSS, MAY GOD COMFORT YOU. EXPECT YOU CONSOLE BHOMBLE AND SUJATA. REACHING EVENING.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

150. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

DESHBANDHU DIED HEART FAILURE DARJEELING. REMAINS REACHING CALCUTTA TOMORROW. AM PROCEEDING THERE TODAY. OBSERVE MOURNING BEFITTING OCCASION INVITE ALL PARTIES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

151. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

SAROJINI NAIDU
HYDERABAD

DESHBANDHU DIED YESTERDAY DARJEELING. WHO CAN KNOW OR FRUSTRATE GOD'S PURPOSE. YOU MUST NOT DISTURB REST IF YOU WILL CONTRIBUTE FULL SHARE MAKING UP LOSS ACCORDING OUR CAPACITY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

152. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI[1]

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

SHAUKAT ALI

DESHBANDHU GONE. GOD'S WILL BE DONE. HE ALONE IS GREAT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

[1] At the end of this telegram Gandhiji wrote: Repeat to Mahomed Ali and add "inform Maulana Abul Kalam".

153. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, VYKOM[1]

[*June 17, 1925*]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
VYKOM

I HEAR PROHIBITION ORDERS WITHDRAWN. MY CONGRATULATIONS. HOPE NO OFFENSIVE DEMONSTRATION AND NO ACT CALCULATED UNNECESSARILY IRRITATE ORTHODOXY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

154. AN APPEAL[2]

June 17, 1925

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

The nation is in mourning for Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. And yet why should we mourn? For though Deshbandhu is dead, he shall live in us. We must take up the work at the point he has left it. Our first lesson must commence with rendering the honours that are due to the dead. Let our affection be not blind but intelligent.

When the remains reach the Sealdah station, there is likely to be a great rush of people. If we are to satisfy the desire of everyone to pay his or her respect to the remains, the following rules must be observed:

1. There must be no shouting.
2. There must be no rush towards the carriage. People should stand where they find themselves and must not push their way through the crowd.
3. A clear way must be kept for the coffin-bearers to pass.

[1] In March 1925, Gandhiji went on a tour of Kerala, and held discussions with local leaders like K. Kelappan Nair, and the Commissioner of Police, Trivandrum—W. H. Pitt, with whom he later maintained contact in regard to the problem; *vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 320-21. Gandhiji released this correspondence to the Press on March 24, stating that the "agreement" embodied therein marked some progress in the movement for the reform.

[2] This was distributed in the form of leaflet.

4. There should be no one in front save the authorized band of *Kirtankars* and others. Those who wish to take part in the procession will kindly take up the rear.

They must not break through the line.

5. At the burning ghat, there should be no rush made towards the funeral pyre. It will not be possible to expose the body to view as it is feared that, three days having already elapsed, it must be in a state of decomposition.

6. Please remember that respect for the memory of the deceased patriot demands not any outward temporary show of affection, but an inward determination to deserve the heritage the Deshbandhu has left us.

I am your servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-6-1925

155. THE GREAT BEREAVEMENT

CALCUTTA,
June 17, 1925

When the heart feels a deep cut, the pen refuses to move. I am too much in the centre of grief to be able to send much for the readers of *Young India* across the wire. The five days of communion with the great patriot which I had at Darjeeling brought us nearer to each other than we ever were before. I realized not only how great Deshbandhu was, but also how good he was. India has lost a jewel. But we must regain it by gaining swaraj.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 18-6-1925

156. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KHULNA[1]

June 17, 1925

You have heard from Acharya Ray what a terrible blow has befallen us, but I know that if we are true servants of the country, no blow, however great, will break our spirit. I was faced with

[1] Seven addresses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the local bodies, the Municipality, the District Board and the People's Association. Sir P. C. Ray announced the news of the death of C. R. Das.

a conflict of duties this morning as soon as the sad news was broken to me. It was my duty to leave for Calcutta by the first train available. It was also my duty to go through the programme you had fixed up for me. The spirit of service in me prompted me to finish the work here, but whilst I have preferred to stop here, to meet those who have come from distant places, I shall, instead of my usual speech on Congress work, devote it to the memory of the departed Deshbandhu. I am sure that my staying here to go through the programme in preference to running up to Calcutta will please his soul.

Mr. Das was one of the greatest of men.[1] I have had the privilege of knowing him for the last six years, and, when I parted from him only a few days ago at Darjeeling, I said to a friend that the closer I came to him the more I came to love him. I saw during my brief stay at Darjeeling that no thought but that of the welfare of India occupied his mind. He dreamed and thought and talked of the freedom of India and of nothing else and I may tell you that, until the moment I took leave of him in Darjeeling, he was asking me to stop longer in Bengal to bring the different parties together, so that the energies of all may be concentrated on one purpose throughout my tour in Bengal.

Those who had differences with him, those who bitterly criticized him did not hesitate to admit that no other man could take his place in Bengal. He was fearless. He was brave. His love for the young men of Bengal was boundless. There is not a young man but has told me that never had his request to Mr. Das for help gone in vain. He earned lakhs and gave away lakhs to the young men of Bengal. His sacrifice was matchless. And who am I to talk of his great intellect and his statesmanship?

On more than one occasion at Darjeeling, he told me that the freedom of India depends on non-violence and truth. The Hindus and Mussalmans of India should know that his heart knew no differences between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. I would like to tell all Englishmen in India that he bore no ill will to them. "If I live I live for swaraj; if I die I die for swaraj," that was his vow to his motherland.

What shall we do to perpetuate his memory? It is easy to shed tears, but no tears can help us or his nearest and dearest. Only if everyone of us, Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians, all who call themselves Indians, pledge ourselves to do the work in

[1] The newspaper reports that Gandhiji broke down and was unable to proceed for a minute or two.

which he lived, moved and had his being, shall we have done something. We are all believers in God. We should know that the body is ever perishing. The soul is imperishable. The body that held Mr. Das has perished, but his soul will never perish, not only the soul, but even the name of him who had served and sacrificed so much will remain immortal and every one, young and old, who follow his example to ever so little an extent will help to perpetuate his memory. We have none of us his intellect, but we can imitate the spirit in which he served the motherland.

Mr. Das tried to learn spinning in Patna, and in Darjeeling I gave him spinning lessons and he promised me that he would try to learn spinning and spin so long as his body allowed. He had converted his Darjeeling House into a spinning club. His good wife pledged herself to spin at least for half an hour every day, excepting when she was ill, and his daughter who was there, his sister and sister's daughter were all regularly spinning. Often would he say to me: 'I think it is essential to go to the Councils, but spinning is equally essential and not only is it essential, it is impossible to make Council work effective without spinning.'

It is not for me to say how much he had done to bring the Hindus and Mussalmans together; and as to his love for the untouchables, I need only tell you what I heard last night from a *Namasudra* leader at Barisal. He said that the first to help him with money was Mr. Das and the next was Dr. Ray. You cannot all go to the Councils, but you can do all the three things that were dear to him.

I regard myself as a loyal servant of India and a loyal brother and colleague of the late Mr. Das and as such I publicly declare that I shall, consistently with my principle, try to give henceforward, if it is possible, even more help to the followers of Mr. Das than I have up to now done in their Council programme. I pray to God that He may ever keep me from doing or speaking aught calculated to injure his work. Our differences regarding the Council-entry remained, but our hearts were one. Differences in political methods will remain until the end of time, but they should never separate people or make of them mutual enemies. The same love of the motherland which prompted me to do one thing prompted him to do something else and such honest difference means no detriment to the cause of the country. Not differences in methods, but insincerity is the curse.

During my stay at Darjeeling, I could see that Mr. Das's tenderness towards his political opponents was every day increasing, but I must not attempt to describe those sacred memories. Mr.

Das was one of the jewels among the servants of the country. His service and his sacrifice were matchless. May their memory ever remain with us and may his example inspire us to noble efforts! Our way is long and dreary and nothing will stand us in good stead as our own reliance on ourselves. Self-reliance was Mr. Das's watchword and may it long inspire us! May his soul rest in peace!

The Hindu, 18-6-1925

157. NOTES

Spinning in Darjeeling

But for the presence of Deshbandhu Das in Darjeeling, I hardly think I would have gone there though the sight of the snowy range was a temptation. I had thought that, for me, to deliver the message of the charkha to the fashionable people of Darjeeling would be simple folly. My fear was wholly unjustified. I was privileged to address a meeting of ladies who listened to the message of the wheel with sympathy. Mrs. Blair, the late W.C. Bonnerjee's daughter, was to start a spinning class for the fashionable ladies. I was privileged, too, to deliver my message to a small meeting of missionaries. Of this, however, perhaps more later. Nor did I know that I should have the good fortune to see so many Nepali, Bhutia and other people. They evinced the greatest interest in the message. But my keenest joy was to see Shrimati Basanti Devi Das learning spinning and taking a vow religiously to spin every day for at least half an hour except in cases of illness. Her daughter knew it already. But she had neglected it. She has now returned to it and added spinning by the *takli* which she picked in ten minutes. Shrimati Urmila Devi and her children have been spinning regularly for some time now. And Deshbandhu himself took lessons on the *takli*. But he finds spinning harder than giving defeats to the Government or winning cases for clients. "My husband can hardly turn the key of his box right; I have always to help him", pleaded Basanti Devi on behalf of her husband. "You can, therefore, understand why it is so difficult for him to learn spinning." But Deshbandhu has assured me that he is going to insist on learning spinning. He had lessons in spinning at the wheel in Patna. They were interrupted by his illness. He told me that he thoroughly believed in the charkha and wanted to help it in every way possible. It was a perfect pleasure to me to see the whole house-hold of the Mayor of Calcutta plying the charkha in fashion-

able Darjeeling and creating a charkha atmosphere there. Needless to say, they were all dressed in khaddar. For Deshbandhu khaddar is not ceremonial wear. It is habitual with him. He tells me it would be difficult for him to revert to the foreign or mill-made cloth even if he wished to.[1]

Wanted a Secretary

Those who are interested in cow-protection will not, I hope, think that I am neglecting the trust imposed upon me. At the time of accepting it, I warned the members of the Committee that I should be perfectly useless for any work for the Association if I did not succeed in finding a good secretary. I regret to inform them, and others interested, that I have as yet failed to find one to my satisfaction. He must have a competent knowledge of English and at least a working knowledge of Hindustani. He should be a whole-time worker with no other calls upon his time. He must be a lover of the cow and have faith in the programme sketched by the Association to achieve its object. He must have a pure character and a healthy body. He will be paid according to his needs so long as they are not extraordinary. Lastly, he must be a student capable of application; for he will be expected to study the literature connected with cow-protection. Will those who think they possess the foregoing qualifications please write to me giving full particulars including the salary required?

Tilak Swaraj Fund

What use has been made of this fund is a question that still continues to worry people. A Punjabi correspondent says that, in the course of his khaddar tour, he finds people inquiring about the disposal of the fund. I have repeatedly stated in these columns that full and certified balance-sheets have been published from time to time. Let the public also realize that the fund was distributed among twenty-one provinces and that several lacs were earmarked. Not only has the A.I.C.C. published an all-India balance-sheet, but the Provinces too, have done likewise. Though there has been here and there misapplication of the funds and even defalcation, on the whole I am satisfied that the money has been spent for the purpose intended. Any patient student of Congress affairs can, whenever he wishes, study the printed figures and find out for himself how the money was used.

[1] Here *Young India* has the following note: Since the above was set in type, we have received the sad news of the passing away of the Deshbandhu on Tuesday, at 5.30 p. m. at Darjeeling, owing to heart-failure. Asstt. Editor, *Y.I.*

WHAT OF PURSES?

The same Punjabi correspondent asks how the purses presented to me at the different places are utilized. As a rule, the money is left at the places where it is given with instructions for its use in the khaddar propaganda. Only, where I find no one whom I want to entrust with the use of the money given, I keep it with me and use it through the Ashram for khaddar propaganda. Where the money is earmarked, naturally, I have nothing to do but to hand the contents for the earmarked purpose to the persons concerned.

HAS NO USE NOW

The correspondent writes:

> During my hawking tours I find people saying: "As the Congress is on the wane, why are you giving yourself the useless trouble of hawking khaddar? When the Congress becomes strong again, we will buy khaddar; now we wear foreign cloth. Let us give ourselves the pleasure of using it for the time-being." Thus talked to me several pleaders. This is one side of the picture. I met a pleader who bought some himself and took us to people and promised to hawk khaddar twice every week among all sorts of people.

The instances of steady work can be multiplied. But I have never yet met anyone to say what these pleader friends in the Punjab are reported to have said. Surely, they do not need to be told that khaddar is not for temporary use. It is a permanent article of wear as wheat and rice are permanent articles of food. And they could only have been joking when they said that they wanted the pleasure of wearing foreign cloth. Is there pleasure in wearing it? Is it not the same thing as saying that there is pleasure in slavery? It was not an uncommon experience, when slavery was abolished in the Southern States, to find slaves refusing freedom; slavery had become second nature with them.

'FEED THE MILLIONS'

A member of the 49 Bengal Regiment writes:

> It is admitted on all hands that you are the greatest leader of the world. What is the greatest leader for? The greatest leader is for providing the starving millions of India! Isn't it? So long as you are not able to feed and clothe the thirty-two crores of Indians, you can't expect swaraj. I can give you swaraj in no time, if you can give me one hundred crores of rupees. You speak of swaraj, you speak of charkha, etc., but you do not speak of feeding the starving people. The man who does not get proper food, cannot take to charkha. First of all "belly" then cloth. I can remain stark naked for a day, but I cannot remain

without food even for a couple of hours. If you can feed and give money to the Indians, the Indian masses will at once respond to your call, otherwise not.

In the first place, let me repudiate the "greatest man" title though I do not need to do it, as I have never claimed or accepted it. Daily do I feel both my littleness and helplessness. I have never yet realized my greatness. But if 'providing the starving millions' can make me great, I am on the way to greatness. For I claim nothing less for my prescription, the charkha. It is designed to feed and clothe the starving millions. Clothing, I admit, is a secondary consideration. But the charkha is intended to feed first and then to clothe. I have proposed to give not merely one hundred crores of rupees once for all. My proposal is to give sixty crores at least every year. I gladly accept the formula that the famishing masses will respond to the call only of those who give them food and money. My gift includes both. But who will bell the cat? A physician can prescribe an infallible remedy, he cannot compel the patient to adopt it. The disease of the masses is not want of money so much as it is want of work. Labour is money. He who provides dignified labour for the millions in their cottages, provides food and clothing or, which is the same thing, money. The charkha provides such labour. Till a better substitute is found, it must, therefore, hold the field.

Nationalism *v.* Internationalism

A gentleman met me in Darjeeling and related to me the story of a nurse who preferred not to serve her nation to the injury of others. The story was, I could see at once, related for my edification. I gently explained to the friend that evidently he had not followed my writings or doings, though he claimed to have done so. I told him, too, that my patriotism was not narrow, and that, it included not merely the welfare of India but the whole world. I told him further, that being a humble man knowing my own limitations, I was satisfied with the service of my own country, taking care at the same time that I did nothing with the intention of injuring another country. In my opinion, it is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when peoples belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of and rise on the ruin of the other. Indian

nationalism has, I hope, struck a different path. It wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. Anyway, there is no uncertainty about my patriotism or nationalism. God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my Maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them, I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country.

Hindi in Bengal

Some lovers of Hindi are not satisfied that I insist on speaking in Hindi to the audiences in Bengal and that I plead for it in season and out of season at public meetings. By the permission and kindness of the members who were all English scholars, I spoke, even to the select audience I had at the Bengal Sahitya Parishad's meeting, in Hindi. But these lovers of Hindi would have me to open Hindi classes in Bengal and carry on propaganda as I was instrumental in doing in the Southern Presidency. I am sorry I cannot respond. I have come to the limit of my resources. Moreover, there is a large Hindi-knowing population in Calcutta. There are even Hindi newspapers published in that city of palaces. It is, therefore, up to the lovers of Hindi in Calcutta to shoulder the burden. They have both money and scholars. It is possible for them to have Hindi classes in all the chief centres of Bengal. My sympathy would naturally be with any such movement. But the organization must be conducted by local enthusiasts. If the South and Bengal can be induced to take up Hindi, the question of a common medium for all India is easily solved. Nowhere else have I ever found any difficulty in making myself understood through my broken Hindi or Hindustani.

Tamilnad

The reader will recall that, in the list of Congress membership under the new franchise, Tamilnad figures were given in a lump at 1,400. I have now received a wire from the Secretary saying that, till the end of May, there were 989 enrolled as A class and 802 as B class members. Encouraging as this is, Tamilnad can easily do much better.

V. V. S. Iyer

The readers of *Young India* will share my regret over the death by drowning of Sjt. V. V. S. Iyer[1]. I had the pleasure of meeting

[1] Barrister-at-law, Tamil scholar; translated the *Kural* into English; wrote commentary on *Kamba Ramayanam*, etc.

him in London years ago. He was then a fierce anarchist. But he gradually mellowed down. The fire of patriotism burnt none the less brightly in him. He was a staunch Non-co-operator and, latterly, he had intended to devote himself entirely to conducting the Shermadevi Gurukul. I always regarded him as a fine, sincere and persevering servant of the nation. May his soul rest in peace.

Young India, 18-6-1925

158. ARE WE READY?

Mr. Bharucha[1] has made a public appeal to me to call an all-parties conference again because, in his opinion, time is now favourable for it. Deshbandhu Das has placed in my hands a copy of *The Mahratta* in which also I observe a similar appeal. I am aware that Sarojini Devi holds similar views. But my position is much the same on this suggestion as on that of calling an A.I.C.C. meeting. If I get a requisition, say from Mr. Jinnah, Sir Mohmad Shafi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Surendra Nath, the orthodox non-Brahmin leaders, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani[2], Dr. Sapru[3] and others, I shall gladly convene the conference. Personally, I think that we are not more ready today for coming together than we were in Delhi. If it is about swaraj that we are to meet, we shall quarrel over the Hindu-Muslim question. If it is about getting all parties on the Congress platform, then the A.I.C.C. is the proper body first to consider or devise new plans. For unless the present Congressmen are fairly united in the desire and the plan of execution, a general conference must prove futile. If it is the spinning franchise alone that stands in the way, the method is simpler still. The original party to the franchise pact should first consider the suggestion to revise it. They are the Swaraj Party—not the individual Swarajists—and myself. The pact was between the Party and myself, representing no party but still representing an indefinite number of men holding my views. I want to do nothing in the Congress without the consent of the Swaraj Party. If that Party, therefore, desires a revision of the franchise, it can have it even now for the asking, so far as I am concerned. And when the Party has made up its mind, the

[1] B. F. Bharucha

[2] 1880-1941; editor of *The Leader*, English daily from Allahabad

[3] Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949); eminent lawyer, constitutionalist and politician; Law Member in Viceroy's Council, 1920-22; President of the Liberal Federation in 1923 and 1927

A.I.C.C. meeting can be called to give effect to its desires. I regard myself as nothing in the Congress. I admit that I do not carry educated India with me in my views on spinning as on several other things. Educated Indians brought the Congress into being and they must dominate and shape its policy. I feel that I represent the mass-mind however inadequately it may be. But I want to act upon the Congress only indirectly by carrying conviction to individuals by argument and facts, —not by taking votes which might be given for considerations not based on merits. So long as the masses do not think for themselves and are likely to be swayed by those who, for the time being, exercise influence on them, it will be wrong to use their votes. If, therefore, the Swaraj Party, which undoubtedly represents the bulk of educated India, desires to reject the spinning franchise, it can do so today without any opposition from me. Only, then it will be improper to expect me to lead the Congress. I am unfit just now for any other work but that of the triple constructive programme. For me success in it is swaraj, and swaraj without it is an impossibility. I must, therefore, make room for those who take what has been called a broader view of things.

Mr. Deshmukh is said to have suggested that I should retire from public life if I cannot revise my views. I have not seen his Satara address. But if he has said so, I think he had a perfect right to do so. I would say the same thing of one who, I may think, was, by his activity, doing harm to the country. Did not all non-co-operators call upon councillors to resign? Mr. Deshmukh may be wrong, but his right to correct a public man may not be questioned; nor has he said anything strange or new. Indeed, there was a time when I seriously thought of retiring, but I found that it was no use. I believe with Maulana Mahomed Ali that a public man may not give up his trust so long as he believes in it. He must be relieved of it. He said that if I retired prematurely I would be putting an undue strain upon political opponents and on the country. I must cease to be popular before I could retire in spite of confidence in my message. And even then, it often becomes a point of extreme delicacy to decide between persistence and withdrawal. The fact is, retirement at the bidding of another from service voluntarily taken up is not so simple as it may appear. But Mr. Deshmukh has courageously paved the way for the public to think out the question. Those who would have me to leave the field should at least create public opinion against my methods and views which they regard as unsound. My mahatmaship is no passport for the currency of bad coin.

But the charkha is no bad coin for me. I have faith in it to defend it against the whole world. I want freedom for all. I can think of it only in non-violent terms. If we are to get our freedom by strictly non-violent means, we can get it only through the charkha, which necessarily includes Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and several other things which I need not mention here. In my opinion, the Congress will commit a terrible mistake if it abolishes the franchise. But my belief in democracy is worth nothing if it does not include the right to commit even terrible mistakes. I, therefore, know that my belief, though right in my estimation, must be rejected if the others do not feel it within them. I want a living faith in the charkha and consequent active co-operation. Mere mechanical assent without corresponding action can do no good to anybody. And in coming to a conclusion on the subject, my personality must be dismissed from consideration. No man is indispensable for the evolution of this great and ancient land of dharma. Let India live, though a hundred Gandhis have to perish.

Young India, 18-6-1925

159. A DOMESTIC CHAPTER

A *vakil* from Lyallpur sends the following letter addressed to the Editor, *Young India*:

> About three or four years ago, a company, "All-India Stores Ltd.", was started at Calcutta with Mr. H. M. Gandhi, son of our Mahatmaji, as one of the directors, as advertised by a representative of the said company at Rawalpindi. A client of mine was persuaded to pay certain sums to the said representative and also to the company in pursuance of his having been so persuaded to become a shareholder. I have written to the known and notified address, 22 Amratalla Street, Calcutta, of the company and so has my client. My client fears that perhaps it was a bogus affair and he has been done out of his money. In the interests of your (Mahatma's) good name and the economic welfare of this poor country, I fondly hope and wish and even pray, my client's fears may be unfounded. The post office has returned all our letters back through the Dead Letter Office. So, some ground at least exists for my client's suspecting that the company is no more. Is it a fact that Mahatmaji's son was a Director in it, and is it a fact that such a company came into being and is still existing, and where?
>
> Please excuse my writing to you about it. My client who is a Mohammedan gentleman and whose respect for Mahatmaji led him to

become a shareholder in the company, wants to verify these facts. Hence the query.

But for some important principles involved in the letter, I would have satisfied myself with a private reply, though the letter is meant for publication. It was necessary to publish it also, because it is highly likely that many shareholders feel like the *vakil*'s client. They too should have such satisfaction as I could render to them. I do indeed happen to be the father of Harilal M. Gandhi. He is my eldest boy, is over 36 years old and is father of four children, the eldest being 19 years old. His ideals and mine having been discovered over fifteen years ago to be different, he has been living separately from me and, since 1915 has not been supported by or through me. It has been my invariable rule to regard my boys as my friends and equals as soon as they completed their sixteen years. The tremendous changes that my outer life has undergone from time to time were bound to leave their impress on my immediate surroundings,—especially on my children. Harilal who was witness to all the changes, being old enough to understand them, was naturally influenced by the Western veneer that my life at one time did have. His commercial undertakings were totally independent of me. Could I have influenced him, he would have been found associated with me in my several public activities and earning, at the same time, a decent livelihood. But he chose, as he had every right to do, a different and independent path. He was and is still ambitious. He wants to become rich and that too, easily. Possibly he has a grievance against me that, when it was open to me to do so, I did not equip him and my other children for careers that lead to wealth and fame that wealth brings. He started the Stores in question without any the least assistance of any kind whatsoever from me. I did not lend my name to them. I never recommended his enterprise to anybody either privately or openly. Those who helped him did so on the merits of the enterprise. No doubt his sonship must have helped him. As long as the world lasts, and in spite of its protests against *varnashrama*, it will give credit to heredity. Being my son, he must be good and straight, cautious in his pecuniary affairs and as reliable as his father. So must many have argued. They have my sympathy, but beyond that nothing more. I must disclaim all responsibility, moral or otherwise, for the doings of even those who are nearest and dearest to me except those wherein they act with me or, I permit them to act in my name or with my certificate. I have enough to be responsible for myself. I alone know my sorrows and my troubles in the course of the

eternal duel going on within me and which admits of no truce. I ask the reader to believe me when I say that it taxes all my energy, and if I feel as a rule stronger for the combat, it is only because I remain wide awake. I make the reader a present of the thought that even my swaraj activity has a bearing on that duel. It is for the supreme satisfaction of my soul that I engage in it. "This is selfishness double distilled," said a friend once to me. I quickly agreed with him.

I do not know Harilal's affairs. He meets me occasionally, but I never pry into his affairs. I do not know that he is a Director in his Company. I do not know how his affairs stand at present, except that they are in a bad way. If he is honest, limited or unlimited though his Stores were, he will not rest till he has paid all the creditors in full. That is my view of honest trade. But he may hold different views and seek shelter under the law of insolvency. Sufficient for me to assure the public that nothing crooked will have countenance from me. For me, the law of satyagraha, the law of love, is an eternal principle. I co-operate with all that is good. I desire to non-co-operate with all that is evil,—whether it is associated with my wife, son or myself. I have no desire to shield any of the two. I would like the world to know the whole of the evil in us. And in so far as I can, with decency, I let the world into all the domestic secrets so-called. I never make the slightest attempt to hide them, for I know that concealment can only hurt us.

There is much in Harilal's life that I dislike. He knows that. But I love him in spite of his faults. The bosom of a father will take him in as soon as he seeks entrance. For the present, he has shut the door against himself. He must still wander in the wilderness. The protection of a human father has its decided limitations. That of the Divine Father is ever open to him. Let him seek it and he will find it.

Let the *vakil* and his client know that my good name is not worth keeping, if it suffers because of the errors of a grown-up boy who has no encouragement from me in them. "The economic welfare of this poor country" will be fairly safe in spite of failures of private firms, if the President for the time being of the Congress and the members of the various organizations remain true to their trust and never mishandle a single pice. I pity the client who, out of respect for me, became a share-holder in a concern whose constitution he evidently never cared to study. Let the client's example be a warning against people being guided by big names in their transactions. Men may be good, not necessarily their

children. Men may be good in some respects, not necessarily, therefore, in all. A man who is an authority on one matter is not, therefore, an authority on all matters. *Caveat emptor.*

Young India, 18-6-1925

160. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
June 18, 1925[1]

PANDIT MOTILALJI NEHRU
HURST LODGE
DALHOUSIE

AM OFFICIATING FOR YOU. WILL DO NOTHING CONSCIOUSLY THAT YOU MAY NOT ENDORSE. AM CONSTANTLY BY WIDOW'S SIDE. PRAY TAKE REST AND NO RISK. YOU MUST DESCEND TO PLAINS IN FULL VIGOUR. STAYING CALCUTTA TILL MEMORIAL SERVICE AT LEAST. WIRE PROGRESS HEALTH. IS JAWAHARLAL STAYING THERE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10644

161. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR[2]

[CALCUTTA,
On or after *June 18, 1925*]

WE MAY NOT AGREE ANY HALF SETTLEMENT BUT SATYAGRAHIS MAY POST THEMSELVES WHERE COMMISSIONER DOES NOT OBJECT. YOUR WIRE NOT EXPLICIT. ANYWAY ROADS MUST BE FULLY OPEN.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10691

[1] The body of C. R. Das reached Calcutta on this day.

[2] This was in reply to the telegram from Kelappan concerning the Vykom Satyagraha received on June 18, 1925, which read: Government tacitly permitting use half roads. No proclamation. Closing remaining roads means perpetuating unapproachability. Solution unacceptable. Abandoning satyagraha means acquiescing in unapproachability. Wire. Kelappan also wrote in detail

162. LONG LIVE DESHBANDHU![1]

[*June 19, 1925*]

Calcutta demonstrated yesterday the hold Deshbandhu had on Bengal, nay, India. Calcutta is, like Bombay, cosmopolitan. It has people from all the provinces. And all these people were as hearty participators in the procession as the Bengalis. The wires that are pouring in from every part of India emphasize the fact of his all-India popularity.

It could not well be otherwise among a people known for their gratefulness. And he deserved it all. His sacrifice was great. His generosity had no bounds. His loving hand was opened out to all. He was reckless in his charities. And only the other day, when I gently remarked that he might have been discriminate, prompt came the reply, "I do not think I have lost by my indiscriminations." His board was free to the prince and the pauper. His heart went out to everyone in distress. Where is the young man in all Bengal who does not owe a debt of gratitude to Deshbandhu in some shape or other? His unrivalled legal talents were also at the disposal of the poor. I understand that he defended many, if not all, political prisoners without charging them a pie. He went to the Punjab inquiry and paid his own expenses. He carried a princely house-hold in those days. I had it from him

---

on the same day; *vide* Appendix IV. Along with the letter, he forwarded to Gandhiji a sketch of the Vykom roads access to which was the subject of satyagraha. Gandhiji wrote again, *vide* "Letter to K. Kelappan Nair", 28-7-1925.

On June 21, W. H. Pitt wired Gandhiji, at Calcutta, thus: "Please telegraph to your Vaikom friends not to cross original boundary without your permission. Situation is complicated by doubts as to action satyagrahis may take. Anything they do cannot possibly advance matters and may retard them. So they had better stand still." In reply to this Gandhiji seems to have sent either a copy of his telegram to Kelappan or some other message which is, however, not available. It was to this that Pitt evidently referred to in his further telegram dated June 22: "Thanks wire. Satyagrahis have already broken pact and advanced. Police picquets therefore restored. But will be withdrawn again on your enforcing discipline."

At about the same time Gandhiji sent a telegram to Kelappan; it is likely that Gandhiji sought C. Rajagopalachari's view of the matter. On June 20, Gandhiji received a telegram from him reading: "My opinion partial opening not acceptable. Modified satyagraha may continue for prohibited roads."

[1] This was also published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 20-6-1925.

that he spent during that stay in the Punjab Rs. 50,000. This large-heartedness towards all who sought his help made him the undisputed ruler of thousands of young hearts.

He was as fearless as he was generous. His stormy speeches at Amritsar took my breath away. He wanted immediate deliverance for his country. He would not brook the alteration or removal of an adjective—not because he was unreasonable but because he loved his country so well, only too well. He gave his life for it. He controlled enormous forces. He brought power to his party by his indomitable zeal and perseverance. But this tremendous outpouring of energy cost him his life. It was a willing sacrifice. It was noble.

Faridpur was his crowning triumph. That utterance of his is a demonstration of his supreme reasonableness and statesmanship. It was a deliberate, unequivocal and, for him (as he said to me), final acceptance of non-violence as the only policy and, therefore, political creed for India.

In constructing together with Pandit Motilal Nehru and the disciplined stalwarts from Maharashtra the great and growing Swaraj Party out of nothing, he showed his determination, originality, resourcefulness and contempt of consequences after he had once made up his mind that the thing to be done was right. And today the Swaraj Party is a compact, well-disciplined organization. My differences about the Council-entry were and are fundamental, but I never doubted the usefulness of Council-entry for the purpose of embarrassment and continuously putting the Government in the wrong. No one can deny the greatness of the work done by the Party in the Councils. And the credit for it must predominantly belong to Deshbandhu. I entered into the pact with him with my eyes open. I have since done my little best to help the Party. His death renders it doubly my duty to stand by the Party, now that the leader is gone. I shall do nothing to impede its progress where I may not be able to help.

But I must hark back to the Faridpur speech. The nation will appreciate the courtesy of the acting Viceroy in sending a message of condolence to Shrimati Basanti Devi Das. I note with gratefulness the warm tributes paid by the Anglo-Indian Press, to the memory of the deceased. The Faridpur speech seems to have impressed most Englishmen with its transparent sincerity. I am anxious that this death should not end with a mere display of courtesy. The Faridpur speech had a great purpose behind it. It was a generous response to the Anglo-Indian friends who were anxious

for the great patriot to make his position clear and make the first approach. He made it. The cruel hand of death has removed the author of the gesture from our midst. But I would like to assure Englishmen who may be still doubtful about the sincerity of Deshbandhu's motive that, throughout my stay in Darjeeling, the one thing that struck me most forcibly was his utter sincerity about that utterance. Can this glorious death be utilized to heal wounds and forget distrust? I make a simple suggestion. Will the Government, in honour of the memory of Chittaranjan Das, who is no longer with us to plead the cause, release the political prisoners who he protested were innocent? I am not now asking for their discharge on the ground of innocence. The Government may have the best proof of their guilt. I simply ask for their discharge as a tribute to the deceased and without prejudice. If the Government mean to do anything to placate Indian opinion, there can be no more opportune time and no better inauguration of a favourable atmosphere than the release of these prisoners. I have travelled practically all over Bengal. Public feeling, not all necessarily Swarajist, is sore on the point. May the fire that burnt yesterday the perishable part of Deshbandhu also burn the perishable distrust, suspicion and fear. The Government may then call a conference, if they will, to consider the best means of meeting Indian demand whatever it may be.

But we will have to do our part, if the Government are to do theirs. We must be able to show that we are no one-man show. In the words of Mr. Winston Churchill, uttered at the time of the War, we must be able to say: 'Business as usual.' The Swaraj Party must be immediately reconstructed. Even the Punjab Hindus and Mussalmans appear to have forgotten their quarrels in the face of this "bolt from the blue". Can both parties feel strong and sensible enough to close the ranks? Deshbandhu was a believer in and lover of Hindu-Muslim unity. He held the Hindus and Mussalmans together under circumstances the most trying. Can the funeral fire purge us of our disunion? But perhaps the prelude to it is a meeting of all the parties on a common platform. Deshbandhu was anxious for it. He could be bitter in speaking of his opponents. But, during my stay in Darjeeling, I don't remember a harsh word having escaped his lips about a single political opponent. He wanted me to help all I could to bring all parties together. It is then for us, educated Indians, to give effect to the vision of Deshbandhu and realize the one ambition of his life by immediately rising a few steps in the ladder of swaraj, even if we may not rise to the top just yet. Then may we all cry from the

164. *LETTER TO THE PRESS*[1]

June 19, 1925

It is due to the public for me to tell them that Shrimati Basanti Devi Das has had enormous strain put upon her ever since the death of her great husband. During the two days I have been watching the continuous strain of mourners coming to her. Her unfailing good nature will not permit her to say 'no' to anybody. The result today has been an almost utter collapse. The public should know that she has a very weak constitution and she suffers from a weak heart. It is her wonderful courage that is keeping her up during the crisis that has overtaken her in common with the nation. But even under normal circumstances it would not be possible for even a healthy person to bear the strain of visitors coming in from morning till late at night. After much persuasion she has permitted me to regulate the time for receiving visitors and after consultation with friends including her medical advisers I have suggested with her consent 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. for receiving visitors. May I respectfully urge all those who may wish to see the stricken lady to do so during the hours mentioned. If this request is respected, it will be possible to avert what threatens to be a complete collapse.

May I ask the vernacular Press to translate this note?

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10592

165. *CHITTARANJAN DAS*

June 20, 1925

A giant among men has fallen. Bengal is like a widow today. A critic of the Deshbandhu remarked to me some weeks ago, "I find fault with him, it is true, but I must candidly confess to you that we have absolutely no one to replace him." When I related the anecdote at the meeting at Khulna where I first heard the stunning news, Acharya Ray exclaimed, "It is but too true. If I could tell who can take Rabindranath's place as a poet, I could

[1] The message, released to the Press from Calcutta, is in Gandhiji's own handwriting.

tell you who can take Deshbandhu's as a leader. There is no man in Bengal even anywhere near Deshbandhu." He was a hero of a hundred battles. He was generous to a fault. Though he earned lacs of rupees from his practice, he never permitted himself to be rich. And even gave up the mansion he had.

I came to know him personally for the first time in 1919 in connection with the Punjab Congress Inquiry Committee. I approached our meeting with suspicion and awe. I had heard from a distance of his roaring practice and his still more roaring eloquence. He had come with his motor car and with his wife and family and was living like a prince. My first experience was none too happy. We had met to consider the question of leading evidence before the Hunter Inquiry. I found in him all the legal subtleties and a lawyer's keen desire to 'floor' witnesses by cross-examination and to expose the many wickednesses of the Martial Law administration. My own purpose was to do something different. I reasoned. The second interview put me at rest and dispelled all my fears. He was all reasonableness and gave a willing ear to all I said. It was my first intimate contact with so many public men in India. We knew one another from a distance. I had taken practically no part in Congress affairs. They merely knew me as a South African warrior. But all my colleagues at once made me feel at home with them, none more so than this illustrious servant of India. I was supposed to be the Chairman of the Committee. "I shall say my say on points wherein we may differ, but I give you my assurance that I shall yield to your judgment." We had come near enough, before this assurance was volunteered, to embolden me to discover my previous suspicions to him. So, when he gave the assurance, I felt proud of a comrade so loyal but at the same time I felt a little humiliated; because I knew that I was a mere novice in Indian politics and hardly entitled to such implicit trust. But discipline knows no rank. A king who knows its value submits to his page in matters where he appoints him as the sole judge. I occupied a place analogous to that of the page. And I record it with grateful pride that, among all the loyal colleagues I had the privilege of being associated with, none was more loyal than Chittaranjan Das.

At the Amritsar Congress, I could no longer claim the rights of discipline. There we were warriors, each holding in trust the welfare of the nation according to his ability. Here there was to be no yielding but to pure reason or party exigencies. It was a perfect treat for me to put up my first fight on a Congress platform. All courteous, all equally unyielding; the great Malviyaji trying

to hold the balance evenly, now pleading with one and now with the other. The President of the Congress, Pandit Motilalji, thought the game was all over. I had a rare time between Lokamanya and Deshbandhu. They had a common formula for the Reforms resolution. Each party wanted to convince the other. But there was no conviction. There was a stalemate and a tragedy behind as many thought. The Ali Brothers whom I knew and loved, but did not know as I do now, pleaded with me for Deshbandhu's resolution. "You must not undo," said Mahomed Ali with his persuasive humility, "the great work you have done in the inquiry." But I was unconvinced. Jairamdas[1], that cool-headed Sindhi, came to the rescue. He passed me a slip containing his suggestion and pleading for a compromise. I hardly knew him. Something in his eyes and face captivated me. I read the suggestion. It was good. I passed it on to Deshbandhu. "Yes, if my party will accept it," was his reply. Mark the loyalty again! He must placate his party,—one secret of his wonderful hold on his people. It passed muster. Lokamanya with his eagle eyes was watching what was transpiring. Pandit Malviyaji's Gangetic stream was pouring from the rostrum—his one eye looking towards the dais, where we manikins were deciding a nation's fate. Lokamanya said, "I don't want to see it, if Das has approved, it is good enough for me." Malviyaji overheard it, snatched the paper from my hands and, amid deafening cheers announced that a compromise had been arrived at. I have given a detailed description of the incident because it epitomizes the reasons of Deshbandhu's greatness and unquestioned leadership, firmness in action, reasonableness in judgment and loyalty to party.

I must pass on. We come to Juhu, Ahmedabad, Delhi and Darjeeling. At Juhu he and Motilalji came to convert me. They had become twins. We had different view points. But they could not brook any difference with me. Could they do so, they would go fifty miles if I wanted them to go only twenty-five. But they would not surrender an inch even to the dearest friend where the country's interest was at stake. We had a kind of compromise. We were unsatisfied, but not in despair. We were out to conquer one another. We met at Ahmedabad. Deshbandhu was in his element, watching every thing as a tactician would. He gave me

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram (b. 1892); Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; later became Minister for Food and Agriculture, Government of India; Governor of Bihar and Assam; member, Rajya Sabha, since 1959

a splendid defeat.[1] How many such defeats I would not have at the hands of friends like him now, alas, no more in body. Let no one consider that we had become enemies because of the Saha resolution.[2] We believed each other to be in the wrong. But it was a difference between lovers. Let faithful husbands and wives recall scenes of their sacred differences and in their differences giving themselves pain in order to heighten the pleasure of a re-union. Such was our condition. So we must meet again at Delhi, the polished Pandit with his terrible jaws, the docile Das in spite of the exterior which, to a passing on-looker, might appear rough. The skeleton of the pact was made and approved there. It was an indissoluble bond which one party has now sealed with death.

I must postpone Darjeeling for the time being. He used often to claim spirituality and used to say that he had no differences with me in religion. But though he never said it, he probably implied that I was too unpoetic to see the fundamental identity of our belief. I own that he was right. He demonstrated during these precious five days in every act of his that he was deeply religious. That he was not merely great, but he was good and growing in goodness. But I must reserve a description of the precious experiences of those five days for a later day. I felt forlorn when cruel fate snatched away Lokamanya from us. I have not yet got over the shock, for I am yet wooing his dearly beloved disciples. But Deshbandhu's withdrawal leaves me in a worse plight. For, when Lokamanya left us, the country was full of hopes. Hindus and Mussalmans appeared to be united for ever. We were on the eve of battle. Now?

Young India, 25-6-1925

166. NEED FOR PROTECTION

The history of the world shows that no business has prospered in the past without protection or help. Help is of three kinds; it can come from the State or society or the individual himself. In any new venture started with the intention of making money, the rich man invests his money without any hope of immediate return on his capital. In a trade venture started for the benefit

[1] The reference is to the A.I.C.C. meeting which was held in Ahmedabad from June 27 to 30, 1924; *vide* Vol. XXIV, pp. 334-40.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXIV, pp. 267-70.

of society as a whole, the latter bears the material losses. Where the Government is well organized and run for the benefit of the people, it will protect the new industry by subsidizing it.

The propagation of khadi is not for the benefit of any single individual and, therefore, it cannot receive protection from one person; even if it does, beyond a certain point such protection will be ineffective, for propagation of khadi cannot be achieved with money only. If we can get the enthusiastic and unstinted support of the Government in this popular cause, what more could we want? That would be evidence of change of heart on its part and we would gladly co-operate with it.

Now about the support of society. Without it, we cannot expect the use of khadi to become universal in the immediate future. We have been trying to secure this support in three ways, the aim being to make khadi cheaper and to improve its quality. In the first place, we reduce the cost of khadi by obtaining monetary help from the wealthy. Next, it is being helped through the franchise qualification. One of the aims behind the inclusion of spinning as a qualification for the franchise is that people may donate half an hour's daily labour to spinning and help reduce the cost of khadi and improve its quality. The third way of helping the movement is to increase the number of khadi experts. Efforts to help the cause in all the three ways are going on simultaneously. During my tours I could see that there is enough love for khadi among the people, or, in other words, they are ready to wear it; but are not prepared to suffer the inconvenience of looking for it, or to spend more on it than they do on foreign cloth. We have thus reached a stage when we can say that, if we can reduce the cost of producing khadi or sell it at cheaper prices, people will use it.

We have not received enough help from the wealthy. Spinning has been included as a qualification for the franchise, but it has not been sincerely welcomed by the people so that the yarn produced in consequence may influence the price. Thus, if society is not prepared to do even this for Mother India, how can we spread the use of khadi as widely as we would like? Besides, as long as voluntary workers who are experts in spinning are not available in large numbers, the quality of yarn and of khadi cannot be improved. All the three aims can be realized with the help of the middle class, that is, by a minority of the people. If they are realized, people will take to khadi very soon. It is, therefore, the middle class which is to blame, whether for a serious lapse or for inadequate effort. If this class—the educated class—understands the importance of khadi it will not be difficult to

spread its use; for then we shall be able to lower the price oi khadi as much as we wish.

If we have a sufficient number of experts in spinning, we can have, in the same time, double or one and a half times the quantity of yarn we get now and of correspondingly better quality. In their absence, we work on spinning-wheels of indifferent quality and accept yarn of any quality we get. These experts will repair defects in the spinning-wheels and so help in increasing the output of yarn and removing defects in its quality. As a result, weaving will also cost less. Hand-spun yarn, being of uneven quality, takes a longer time to weave and so the weaving charges are higher than for the mill-yarn. Unfortunately, in the whole country we have only a limited number of spinning experts. With the scanty preparation with which we started propaganda for spinning, we could have made no progress in any other activity. The progress we have made despite our inadequate preparation is evidence of the power of khadi and its great importance for the country. It is my firm belief that the khadi work is the most important among the activities going on in the country. No other country-wide activity aiming at people's welfare has involved as much circulation of money as khadi during the past four years, or has as many workers engaged in it and earning an honest livelihood through it or working for it honorarily. The number is daily increasing. If such a beneficial activity which requires only a modest effort to yield results receives help in all the three ways we have explained and in the right measure, I am sure that the country would become khadi-minded in no time. Let the wealthy give money, let all men and women—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians—give at least half an hour [to spinning] and let khadi-lovers become experts in its science and give the benefit of their knowledge. The country will then become khadi-minded, the flow of sixty crore rupees from it to foreign countries will stop and the money will be distributed among the poor, and, lastly, the country will acquire confidence in its own strength.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-6-1925

167. PURIFYING FLAME

"At sight of the purifying flame in the path of love, people run away in fear." So sang Pritam[1]. The path of love requires that we should not mind touching the so-called untouchable, that we should honour the despised. This path is strewn with difficulties. That alone is love which endures even when one is abandoned by one's father, turned out of home by the mother, shunned by society and forbidden by the priest to enter the temple.

In a small region like Kathiawar, the movement for the abolition of untouchability has created a stir in the *Vaishnava* world. The gates of *havelis* are being closed against those who do not honour the practice of untouchability and regard it as wrong. Will it not be hard for them to be prevented from visiting the *haveli*? What should they do? There can be only one reply: they should give up the thought of the *haveli*.

After all, it is we ourselves who install the image in the temple. The image which comes to be associated with an evil practice will do more harm than good to us. The ultimate *haveli* is one's own heart. The *haveli* walls are what crutches are to the lame. They are merely a support. When they cease to be a support and instead become a burden, we should throw them away. The gates of the physical *haveli* can be closed, but the doors of the heart-temple are open for all the twenty-four hours. The all-knowing God dwelling in it protects us all the time. May those who tread the path of love realize the presence of that God installed in that shrine and be blessed.

"But the *haveli* is a public place. Supposing we do not respect the prohibition against us? Is it necessary to respect an unreasonable prohibition?" May not some people reason thus? May it not be a sin to respect this prohibition? We can imagine situations in which it will be a sin to respect a prohibition. I do not think that the prohibition against entering *havelis* is of that category. But those who think that it is, will certainly visit *havelis* and suffer the consequences. There is no one single rule in such matters. The general rule should be that, if a small minority regard the practice of untouchability as sinful, but hundreds of others look upon it as virtuous, then the minority should have

[1] A Gujarati poet

patience and respect the prohibition against them. They should try to educate public opinion. They should see the priest and talk with him respectfully. They should plead with the *mahajan* of their community, but, so long as a majority of the *mahajan* has not come round, it would be best for them to respect the prohibition. If public opinion is against the prohibition, one may disregard it after respectfully informing the authorities of one's intention to do so.

I would respectfully submit to the priests that, if they want to become and remain protectors of religion, they should wake up. If, in violation of divine laws, they insist on building walls of superstition and evil, they will not survive long. I believe that, being myself a child, however weak, of the Vallabha sect[1], I have a right to say this. The hereditary seat of honour which they occupy is in danger. I do not want them to cherish untouchability and become untouchables themselves. The idea of untouchability as it is practised today has no place either in the *Bhagavata* or in the *Gita* or in the Vedas or in the Upanishads. Why, it is not even honoured in practice. *Vaishnavas* of their own free will touch people who are regarded as untouchables when their business makes it necessary for them to do so. The law does not recognize untouchability. When *Vaishnavas* go to courts and mills, they touch the untouchables and eat, and even go to *havelis*, without first taking a bath. To keep up this idea of untouchability which has ceased to be followed in practice just in order to harass and show our contempt for the men and women who are regarded as untouchables is neither commonsense nor farsightedness, neither spiritual knowledge nor decency. I describe myself as a *Vaishnava* because I believe that Vaishnavism has a place for all these virtues. In my opinion, the *Vaishnava* way of life had its very origin in compassion, in spiritual knowledge and in the desire to purify the fallen. I see this in Bengal. What Vallabhacharya achieved in the western part, Chaitanya[2] did in the eastern. In Bengal Chaitanya lifted up thousands of peoples who were regarded as untouchables. He weakened the hold of the idea over people's minds and today untouchability is practised in Bengal in a very mild form. The idea of being defiled by touch is altogether unknown there. Untouchability as practised in Bengal only means not accepting water from the "untouchables"

[1] *Vaishnava* cult founded by Vallabhacharya, 15th-16th century

[2] 1485-1533; a Hindu religious reformer who created a casteless society of *Vaishnavas* in Bengal and Orissa which afforded asylum to low-caste Hindus

and denying them the services of washermen and barbers. Even this ignorant notion has lost much of its strength, and there are today many "untouchables" who are doctors and lawyers. Education is spreading among them. In few parts of Bengal do we come across special areas where untouchables live.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-6-1925

168. APPEAL FOR DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND

CALCUTTA,
June 22, 1925

The public may be aware that the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das gave, during his lifetime, his mansion at Russa Road, situated on over 4 bighas of land, in trust for several public objects. We are informed by the trustees that the present value of the property is estimated at Rs. 3,25,000 and that it is burdened with a debt of Rs. 2,20,000. The net value of the donation is therefore about Rs. 1,05,000.

We the undersigned feel sure that Bengal would desire to erect a Memorial worthy of the deceased patriot. Indeed, the unexampled manifestation of grief witnessed in Calcutta on the 18th instant and the public meetings held all over the country to honour the memory of the deceased are positive proof of such a desire. We think that the best way to carry out what appears to us to be the central idea of Deshbandhu in creating the trust referred to by us would be to help in the uplift of the womanhood of Bengal. The founding of a hospital for women irrespective of caste or creed and an institution for the training of nurses is, we believe, a project eminently calculated to promote Deshbandhu's intention.

It is estimated that nothing less than Rs. 10,00,000 would meet the requirements. We believe, too, that 10 lacs is in no way an extravagant sum for a Memorial to our deceased countryman. We, therefore, appeal to the public of Bengal for the sum. Our desire is to make this a non-party Memorial so that all who know the worth of Deshbandhu, although they might not have shared his politics, might take part in subscribing to the memorial. The present trustees are:

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy
Sj. Nirmal Chunder Chunder
Sj. Tulsi Ch. Goswami

Kumar Satya Mohan Ghosal
Sj. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar

They have consented, in order to give the trust a non-party character and under the powers reserved to them, to take two more trustees, namely: Dr. Sir Nilratan Sarkar and Sj. Satish Ranjan Das.

Sir Rajendra Mukherjee of No. 7, Harington Street, has kindly consented to act as Treasurer.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-6-1925

169. APPEAL FOR DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND

CALCUTTA,
June 22, 1925

I trust that the appeal signed by Lord Sinha and others for an All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund will find an enthusiastic and quick response from the public of Bengal. I hope that ten lakhs would be made up by contributions from all the Bengalis and all those who have made Bengal their domicile and are earning their livelihood or making money in Bengal. Above all, my appeal is to young Bengal which, perhaps, more than any other class, is indebted to Deshbandhu. Whilst ten lakhs may come from ten millionaires, it is desirable that the amount is made up chiefly from the poor who can afford even a few pice. The lakhs of men who made the mourning procession in Calcutta on the 18th instant can and should pay their quota.

It should be remembered that ten lakhs is the minimum required, by no means the maximum. After paying Rs. 2,20,000/- for the debts due on the property, there will be available only Rs. 7,80,000/- —not a large sum—for a hospital and a training school for nurses.

Shall we aim at finishing the collection before the first of July? I know that the time is short, but if all the centres organize at once and all work methodically, it is not beyond Bengal's ability to collect the sum. As a somewhat experienced collector of funds, let me say to the public that they must not pay to any but the collectors whom they know and trust. There is not a moment to spare, if we are to finish the collection in eight days. It is possible only:

1. if all who can, give and induce others to give;
2. if all give now;

3. if all give the utmost they can;
4. if the mofussil centres take up the work at once.

The public should remember that

1. this is an All-Bengal Memorial without distinction of race, creed, caste or party;
2. that it is intended to perpetuate the memory of one of the greatest of India's sons;
3. that it is to be for a purely humanitarian purpose.

I understand too that a private hospital exclusively for women and an institution for training nurses are wanted in Calcutta.

I need hardly point out that the names of the Trustees are a guarantee of a proper use of the monies that might be given by donors.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-6-1925

170. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Ashad Sud 1 [June 22, 1925][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I can understand monetary help from the Princes. I hesitate however to entrust all the work to their officials. But I shall be able to come to a definite decision after all of you meet and think about it. We have to think how we can reduce our expenses every year and put the people on their own feet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6205. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

171. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashad Sud 1 [June 22, 1925][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got both your letters at almost the same time. At present I will have to stay in Calcutta itself for one month. Then I shall start touring. I wish you to be settled both in mind and in your place of residence. As to your being fit for work, it is for me—is it not?—to consider. But we shall think of this later. Though I am at present settled in one place, I am very much engrossed in work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 464. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

172. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Ashad Sud 1 [June 22, 1925][2]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter covering reports of all the branches. It seems Devchandbhai has put too much reliance on others. Where accounts are not well kept, we shall have cause to regret. I wrote to . . .[3] that he should show the books which he considers private. From the reports of the branches you have sent, prepare a summary that would be instructive and interesting to people and send it for publication. Also mention therein how many in this activity are meeting their own expenses, how many at reduced pay and how many at their market-price and also how much all of them together receive. You will also give the total number of spinning-wheels plying. What had happened to Jamnadas? My regards to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] & [2] The postmark is "June 23, '25". In the year 1925 *Ashad Sud* 1 fell on June 22.

[3] Omission in the source

[PS.]

I shall be here in Calcutta for some time to come.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6193. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

173. *ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS*[1]

CALCUTTA,
June 23, 1925

I have much pleasure in announcing to the public that the following subscriptions have been handed to Sir R. Mookherjee already:

N. N. Sircar	Rs.	10,000/-
S. R. Das	,,	5,000/-
Rai A. N. Bose	,,	1,000/-
C. C. Law	,,	1,000/-
S.	,,	1,000/-
K.	,,	1,000/-
A.	,,	1,000/-
Suprava Devi	,,	100/-
Anonymous	,,	10/-
Maulvi Abdul Hakim	,,	100/-
Total	Rs.	20,210/-

And I have one cheque of Rs. 1,000/- and a gold ring to be delivered to Sir Mookherjee. I know, too, that Sir Rajendra has small amounts directly sent to him.

Thus the beginning has been well made.

To collect ten lakhs before first July means a collection per day of 1¼ lakhs. The average can only be kept up by strenuous labour on the part of every worker. I hope, therefore, that no worker will wait for invitation, but collect from friends.

The concrete response should be as spontaneous as the attendance on the 18th. I was called to attend the meeting at the Municipal Market tonight. It was a huge meeting. I had gone merely in the hope of collecting subscriptions for the Memorial. But the meeting was too large and unwieldy for the purpose. Organizers of meetings will render service if they will spare me during the period of collection from having to attend a single meeting where there is no collection possible.

[1] Received for the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund

Much is to be expected from the mofussil. Telegrams have been sent to prominent men in the various districts. I trust that they will all collect and send to the Treasurer before first July.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-6-1925

174. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

[Before *June 24, 1925*]

In the course of an interview which he granted to a representative of *The Statesman* in Calcutta he said:

I shall remain here as long as I feel that I am required, or as long as the trusted lieutenants of Mr. Das want me. I have placed myself unreservedly at their disposal.

I have already suggested that Memorial services should be held throughout India on July 1. I am hoping that people representing every variety of opinion will attend in every important centre in India and I am likely to remain here at least up to that date.

Asked for his opinion regarding the future, Mr. Gandhi said:

It is very difficult to say as a man of the world what the future will be, but as a man of faith I can say that the virtues which I was privileged to see in the late Mr. Das will be an asset, resulting in nothing but good. How it will work out I do not know.

Referring to a suggestion which he had previously made that the death of Mr. Das should be marked by a union of parties, Mr. Gandhi said:

If the union can be brought about, not mechanical, but real, it would be for that united party to formulate its demand. It is no use myself personally saying what it should be, but I can say this that, whatever I may wish, I shall not stand in the way of what the majority may wish.

"What is your definition of swaraj?" Mr. Gandhi was asked.

My definition of swaraj is the will for the time being of the people of India, as expressed through their representatives. There cannot be any hard and fast definition of swaraj, as you have, for instance, of a straight line in geometry. It has a varying value according to the variation in the temperament of the people domi-

nated by various circumstances. Therefore, the immediate definition of swaraj is "Dominion Home Rule".

Mr. Gandhi was asked whether he would advise the abandonment of obstructive tactics with particular reference to Bengal.

"If there is an expressed desire for a Ministry when the Bengal Council next meets, would you advise the Council as a whole to oppose it?" Gandhiji replied with a smile:

I would prefer not to answer that question. I would like Bengal not to be despondent, not to lose faith, because that would be betrayal of the great leader who has passed away. I know that he believed often, when there was absolutely no valid reason for belief, and yet his belief was justified by events. No good cause has ever prospered by taking a despondent view.

Bengal has great imagination and it has got great powers of endurance, as I have discovered during my tour. I would ask them to add to this an inexhaustible faith and all will be well.

Incidentally, Mr. Gandhi said that he regarded it as a privilege to be by the side of Mrs. Das at this juncture. She was bearing her grief nobly.

He also paid a tribute to the young men who helped him in the crowd at Mr. Das's funeral.

I might certainly have been crushed to atoms, were it not for their strong arms. This was particularly the case at the burning-ghat.

The Searchlight, 24-6-1925

175. INTERVIEW TO "THE SEARCHLIGHT"

[Before *June 24, 1925*]

Mr. Gandhi, when informed of the reported result of the conversations [in England] between Lord Reading and Lord Birkenhead, said:

The statement, if true, would not surprise me, because I did not expect anything better. However, it will create a sensation in India and deeply hurt the feelings, not merely of the Swaraj Party, but of all parties. Personally, I do not understand what the meaning of Indianization having gone far enough means.

The Searchlight, 24-6-1925

176. TELEGRAM TO S. K. RUDRA

June 24, 1925

SUSHIL KUMAR RUDRA[1]
SOLAN

MY DEEPEST LOVE AND PRAYER WITH YOU FOR PERFECT PEACE TO YOUR SOUL. SO GLAD CHARLIE WITH YOU.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 6048. Courtesy: Mrs. S. K. Rudra

177. INTERVIEW TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"

CALCUTTA,
June 24, 1925

Mr. Gandhi in the course of an interview to *The Englishman* said:

There is no split in the Swaraj Party and there will be none.

Much speculation, he added, was rife and rumours afloat as to the future of the Swaraj Party, but these were mere conjectures and had no foundation at all.

Asked whether he was prepared to accept the leadership of the Party, if it was offered to him, Mr. Gandhi replied in the negative. It was absolutely essential, said Mr. Gandhi, that the leader of the Swaraj Party in Bengal must be a Bengali. As regards actual leadership, there was more than one Bengali Swarajist who was qualified for that high honour but, in his opinion, the best fitted, so far as combined ability, experience and knowledge of the Swarajist working went, was Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, the late Mr. C. R. Das's lieutenant.

Regarding the suggested fusion of the Nationalists and the Swarajists, Mr. Gandhi said that it would be in the best interests of the country if the two parties could unite on honourable terms.

Mr Gandhi stated that he was in the best of health and would stay in Calcutta for a month more.

The Hindu, 26-6-1925

[1] Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He was seriously ill and passed away on June 30.

178. NOTES

No Injustice Meant

> When you say you have not attracted educated India to your message, are you not doing an injustice to educated Indians? Look at Rajagopalachari, your right-hand man, not to mention the band of selfless educated Indian workers scattered throughout the length and breadth of India whom you rarely even mention in *Young India*! Where would you have been but for them? It is all very well to talk of village work, but you are doing that too by their aid!

This question raises a false issue. One swallow does not make a summer. The handful of selfless educated Indians who are silently serving and spreading the message of the spinning-wheel are, indeed, a credit to themselves and the country. Without them I should be perfectly helpless. But they are no more representatives of educated India than I am. As a class, educated Indians stand aloof, not because they are unwilling, but because they are unconvinced. When I wrote the passage[1], I had in my mind such men as Messrs Sastri, Jinnah, Chintamani, Sapru and a whole host of our distinguished educated countrymen. The rank and file, though they like me personally, have a horror for my views and methods. Some of them occasionally but earnestly plead with me to mend my ways so as to make it possible for them to work with me. Nor did I write the passage referred to by way of complaint. I have simply stated the fact with the object of my showing limitations and showing, too, that they are as necessary for the national uplift as the tallest among those who represent the spinning-wheel with all its implications. I own again that the leadership of the Congress should be rightly theirs and that I must not force the issue by a mere shuffling of votes. On the contrary, I must patiently wait till I have convinced them of the supreme necessity of the spinning-wheel and khaddar even for the political emancipation of India.

Institutions before Parents

During my Bengal tour, I heard the astounding statement that the inmates of a public institution claimed to prefer the maintenance of their institution to that of their parents. This was said to command my approval. If anything I have written in these

[1] The reference presumably is to the article "Are We Ready?", 18-6-1925.

pages has given any such impression, I apologize to the readers. I am not conscious of any such guilt. I owe all I am to my parents. I felt towards them as Shravana is said to have done towards his parents. So, when I heard the statement, it was with greatest difficulty that I could curb the anger that was rising in me. The young man who took up the position was hardly serious about it. But nowadays it has become the fashion with some young men to adopt the superior attitude and pose as paragons of perfection. In my opinion, the maintenance of one's aged and infirm parents is a first charge upon grown-up sons. They may not marry if they are not in a position to support their parents. They may not take up public work till this primary condition is fulfilled. They must starve so that their parents may be fed and clothed. What, however, young men are not expected to do is to comply with the demand of thoughtless or ignorant parents. Parents have been known to demand money for things not required for sustenance, but for false show or for uncalled-for marriage expenses of daughters. In my opinion, it is the duty of public workers respectfully to refuse to meet such demands. As a matter of fact, I cannot remember having met a single deserving case of starvation of a public worker. I have found some living in want. I have found a few who should get more than they are able to give themselves. But, as their work prospers and their worth is known, they will not suffer from want. Difficulties and trials make a man. They are a sign of healthy growth. If every young man found himself in plenty and never knew what it was to go without anything necessary, he may be found wanting when the trial comes. Sacrifice is joy.

It is, therefore, not right to parade one's sacrifice before the public. I was told by several workers that they did not mind any sacrifice. On cross-questioning, I was told that the sacrifice consisted in living by begging, in other words, on donations. I told them that there was no sacrifice in living on donations. Many public workers did so, but they did not on that account claim to have sacrificed anything. Many young men have sacrificed lucrative careers. That is certainly to their credit. But even there I should respectfully suggest that praising can well be overdone. No sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy. Sacrifice and a long face go ill together. Sacrifice is "making sacred". He must be a poor specimen of humanity who is in need of sympathy for his sacrifice. Buddha renounced everything because he could not help it. To have anything was a torture to him. The Lokamanya remained poor because it was painful for him to pos-

sess riches. Andrews regards the possession of even a few rupees a burden, and continually contrives to lose them if he gets any. I have often told him that he is in need of a care-taker. He listens, he laughs and repeats the same performance without the slightest contrition. *Madar-i-Hind* is a terrible goddess. She will exact the willing, aye, even unwilling sacrifice of many a young man and young woman before she deigns to say, 'Well done, my children, you are now free.' We are as yet playing at sacrifice. The reality has still to come.

Spinning in Affiliated Schools

During this Bengal tour of mine, I am coming upon many revelations—many pleasant, some unpleasant. There is a village called Upashi, not far from Madaripur. A High School is being conducted in this village. It is affiliated, but takes no aid from the Government. Spinning for one hour has been compulsory for all the boys since the revival of spinning. Weaving was introduced as an optional subject on the arrest in 1921 of Maulana Mahomed Ali. Weaving has been still recently confined to half-khaddar. It was only a few months ago that full-khaddar weaving was introduced. Now the management has undertaken to do away with half-khaddar and confine their attention only to pure khaddar. It was a perfect pleasure to watch about a hundred boys spinning all at the same time. Upon inquiry, I found that the attendance had not suffered by reason of compulsory spinning. The head master told me that he could not have continued it if the parents had disapproved of it or the boys resented it.

The head master put the visitors' book before me for my remarks. On turning over the pages, I read a long report from the Inspector of Schools. Whilst he had no prejudice against spinning, his experience of the experiment, wherever made, went to show that they were a failure as at this school. The Inspector thought that the experiment to be called a success should be self-supporting. I do not know why a spinning class should be self-supporting any more than a geometry class. The success of the latter would be measured by the progress made by the boys in geometry. The success of a spinning class should be measured by the proficiency of the boys in spinning. And that the boys of the High School could show any day. But I am quite prepared to accept the Inspector's challenge and show that, whilst the literary classes cannot be made self-supporting except in certain cases, a spinning class can always be made self-supporting. In

the first instance, a separate spinning master is not a necessity. By small inducements the existing staff can be induced to acquire sufficient knowledge in spinning and they can teach their respective classes. It is even enough to train willing school boys themselves to learn the science so as to be able to teach. The extras to be paid will be easily covered after the first month's tuition. Boys will earn on an average no less than ½ pice per hour. They should really earn one pice each. A class of thirty-two boys will earn four annas per day. That means Rs. 7½ per month. The increase given to the teacher will be no more than Rs. 2½ per month, thus leaving a margin of Rs. 5 per month as saving. This presupposes that yarn spun by the boys will sell. There is no difficulty about selling well-spun yarn. And the boys spinning under supervision must turn out good yarn. Indeed, so far as this particular institution is concerned, Khadi Pratishthan has offered to advance enough cotton and take over yarn at a stated price. The fact is that enough interest is not taken by the teachers in this national art. Hence the apparent failure judged by the Inspector's standard.

A Village Experiment

Thus writes Sjt. Rajagopalachari about the work that is being done at Pudupalayam, a village in the District of Salem:[1]

The reader will note that the actual work began only in August last. The progress reported for so short a time as nine months is most encouraging. The reader will note, too, that though one village has been made the centre, twenty villages are actually being served. It is no small matter to know that ten *Panchama* boys have already received training at this Ashram. And let it be remembered that this is not the only activity of its kind in India. I have already noted several such attempts in Bengal. I have omitted from the letter all reference to finance and audited balance-sheets which are certified by two Chartered Accountants. From these I observe that the khaddar department is not run at a loss.

'On the Verge of It'

I have read your closely written fifteen sheets of note paper. In reply I can only advise you to read my answers in this connection again and again. You will then find that everyone of the points raised by you is covered by my previous answers. If they do not convince I must wait and pray. Nothing that I write further is likely to carry conviction to you. I have observed that there

[1] Not reproduced here

comes a time in our lives when argument makes no appeal to us; we are ready with a counter-argument. I find it even with friends who agree with me on most points. But there are others on which we agree to differ. I must do likewise with you. But I appreciate and honour your striving. You must find me out somewhere in my wanderings. I shall gladly discuss the whole of your philosophy with you. Sometimes a conversation answers when the cold print fails. One thing, however, I may say here. Why do you think that we cannot spin and wear khaddar or remove untouchability or be friends with the Mussalmans till we get swaraj? How will the withdrawal of Englishmen help Hindus to trust the Mussalmans or *vice versa* or open the eyes of blind orthodoxy and better the lot of the oppressed people or induce the idle to work the spinning-wheel and those whose tastes are degraded to revise them and revert to khaddar? Surely if we cannot do these things now under the pressure of adversity, we are not likely to do them when we are lulled into a sense of false security by nominal swaraj? What is there to prevent us now from attempting or accomplishing all or any of these three things if it is not our own unwillingness, lethargy or worse? I invite you and your friends to give your undoubted ability and energy to this constructive programme and you will see swaraj coming nearer every day. Whether you see it or not, I tell you that it is coming nearer exactly in the same proportion as we are accomplishing the three objects above named. The Bastille of untouchability is becoming more and more undermined daily. The pleasing hum of the spinning-wheel is growing more and more audible, and, though seemingly Hindus and Mussalmans are preparing for a pitched battle, they are realizing that it is a useless enterprise. But the battle may be inevitable. If it comes, it will be the dawn of peace.

Humbled Pride

The General Secretary to the Congress writes:

> I am sorry that I made a mistake in the membership chart sent to you on the 16th. The last month's total for Burma should be 75 instead of 70. But the Burma P.C.C. in furnishing this later figure 75 has given no details under classes A and B.
>
> It will be noticed from the chart under reference that only 6 out of 20 provinces furnished information during the current month. Kerala never sent any at all. For the remaining 13 provinces last month's figures only are available. Adding the last month's totals for these 13 and the current month's figures for the 6 provinces the grand total of membership comes to 15,355.

I reproduce this letter not merely for the sake of the correction, but for confessing my failure to command discipline even in such a simple matter as the getting of monthly returns. I used to talk at Belgaum[1] of being exacting in enforcing discipline. I see that I have failed to secure the co-operation of the provincial committees. The Congress constitution provides no sanction against recalcitrant committees. Even if it did, I should be loath to enforce it. But though my pride is humbled, I must still plead and hope. Will the committees please wake up to a sense of their duty and respond to the request of the General Secretary for returns?

Young India, 25-6-1925

179. PLEA FOR HUMILITY

In my talks with public workers in Bengal, I came across a young man who among his claims for public recognition, mentioned his and his fellow-workers' *brahmacharya* or celibacy. The manner of presenting the claim and the self-assurance with which the young man spoke repelled me and I felt that he was talking about things he little knew. His fellow-workers repudiated the claim. And the young man himself, when I cross-questioned him, admitted that the claim could not be sustained. A man who consciously sins with his mind, even though he may not sin with his body is not a celibate. One who cannot remain unmoved at the sight of a woman, however beautiful she may be, is not a celibate. One who keeps his body under control from sheer necessity, does well but is not a celibate. We may not degrade sacred words by a loose use of them. True celibacy has important results which can be verified. It is a difficult virtue to practise. Many attempt it but few succeed. Those who walk about the country in the garb of sannyasins are often no more celibates than the ordinary man in the street. Only the latter is often a better man as he makes no pretension to virtue. He is satisfied that his Maker knows his trials, temptations and his century of triumphs in resisting temptations as also his few falls in spite of heroic attempts. He is satisfied to be judged by the world for his falls. His successes he treasures secretly like a miser. He is too humble to make them known. Such a man has hope of redemption. Not so the self-satisfied sannyasin who does not even know the A B C of restraint. There is danger of public workers who do

[1] At the annual session of the Indian National Congress, in December 1924; *vide* Vol. XXV, p. 454.

not wear the garb of sannyasins, but who prate about sacrifice and celibacy, making both cheap and discrediting themselves and their mission of service.

When I drew up the rules for the guidance of the Ashram at Sabarmati, I circulated copies among friends for advice and criticism. One was sent to the late Sir Gurudas Banerjee. In acknowledging his copy he advised me to add humility to the vows mentioned in the rules. In his letter he said that young workers lacked humility. I told the late Sir Gurudas that whilst I valued his advice and fully recognized the necessity of humility, the mention of it as a vow would derogate from its dignity. It must be taken for granted that those who cultivate truth, ahimsa, *brahmacharya*, must be humble. Truth without humility would be an arrogant caricature. He who wants to practise truth knows how hard it is. The world may applaud his so-called triumphs. Little does the world know his falls. A truthful man is a chastened being. He has need to be humble. A man who wants to love the whole world including one who calls himself his enemy knows how impossible it is to do so in his own strength. He must be as mere dust before he can understand the elements of ahimsa. He is nothing if he does not daily grow in humility as he grows in love. A man who would have his eye single, who would regard every woman as his blood sister or mother, has to be less than dust. He stands on the brink of a precipice. The slightest tunr of the head brings him down. He dare not whisper his virtue to his very own. For he knows not what the next moment has in store for him. For him "pride goeth before destruction and haughtiness before a fall." Well has the *Gita* said, "Passions subside in a fasting man, not the desire for them. The desire goes only when man sees God face to face." And no one can see God face to face who has aught of the I in him. He must become a cypher if he would see God. Who shall dare say in this storm-tossed universe, 'I have won'? God triumphs in us, never we.

Let us not lower the values of these virtues so that we may all be able to claim them. What is true of the physical world is true of the spiritual. If in order to gain a worldly battle, Europe sacrificed several million lives during the late War, itself a transitory event, what wonder that, in the spiritual battle, millions have to perish in the attempt so that one complete example may be left to the world. It is ours merely to make the attempt in the uttermost humility.

The cultivation of these higher virtues is its own reward. He who cashes anyone of them loses his soul. Virtues are not to trade

with. My truth, my ahimsa, my *brahmacharya* are matters between myself and my Maker. They are not articles of trade. Any young man who dares to trade with them will do so at his peril. The world has no standard, no means, wherewith to judge these things. They defy scrutiny and analysis. Let us workers, therefore, cultivate them for our own purification. Let the world be asked to judge us only by our work. An institution or an Ashram that claims public support must have a material object, e.g., a hospital, a school, spinning and khaddar propaganda. The public have the right to know the worth of these activities and if they approve of them, they may support them. The conditions are obvious. There must be honesty and ability about the managers. An honest man who knows nothing of pedagogy has no claim to public support as a teacher. These public institutions must keep proper and audited accounts which should be subject to inspection by the public. These are the tests which conductors have to satisfy. Their private character must not obtrude itself upon public attention for admiration and patronage.

Young India, 25-6-1925

180. FALLEN SISTERS

At Madaripur the reception committee had arranged a spinning demonstration by the fallen sisters. I felt pleased at the sight, but I drew the attention of the organizers to the dangers attendant upon handling the question. But, at Barisal, where the movement for their reclamation first took definite shape, instead of its having taken a healthy course, the appearance of it was decidedly ugly. These unfortunate sisters have been organized there. A misleading name has been given to the organization. Its 'present aims and objects' are stated as follows:

> 1. To help the poor and nurse the sick brothers and sisters.
> 2. (a) To spread education amongst themselves;
> (b) to promote spinning, weaving, tailoring, needle-works and other handicrafts, by establishing a *Nari Silpasram;*
> (c) to give higher musical training.
> 3. To join with all other institutions, which have satyagraha and non-violence as their creed.

To say the least, this is putting the cart before the horse. These sisters are advised to do humanitarian work before reforming themselves. The idea of giving higher musical training will be accounted as extremely funny if it was not tragic in its

consequence. For let it be understood these women do know how to dance and sing. And they may join all organizations which have satyagraha and non-violence as their creed all the time they are, by their trade, doing violence to truth and non-violence!

The document before me says further that they have been enrolled as Congress members and have also been allowed to "do other national work befitting their humble position". They have been even elected as delegates. I have seen what I regard as an obscene manifesto written in their name.

Whatever be the motives, I cannot but regard the whole of this development as disgraceful. I appreciate spinning, but it must not be used as a passport to vice. I like everybody to subscribe to satyagraha, but I would prevent by all the power at my command an unrepentant professional murderer from signing the creed. My whole heart is with these sisters. But I am unable to identify myself with the methods adopted at Barisal. These sisters have acquired a status which, for the sake of the moral well-being of society, they must not have. We will not incorporate an association of known thieves for the purpose for which these women have formed their association. There is less warrant for this association, for these are more dangerous than thieves. The latter steal material possessions, the former steal virtue. Whilst man is primarily responsible for the existence of these unfortunate members of society, it must not be forgotten that they have acquired tremendously dangerous powers for mischief. I was told in Barisal that the corporate activity of these women had made them unhealthily forward and that they were already producing a corrupt influence upon the Barisal youths. I wish that the association could be disbanded. I am firmly of opinion that, so long as they continue the life of shame, it is wrong to accept donations or services from them or to elect them as delegates or to encourage them to become members of the Congress. There is no legal bar against their entry into the Congress, but I had hoped that public opinion would keep them off the Congress and that they themselves would have the modesty to refrain from seeking Congress membership.

I wish that my words could reach them. I would urge them to withdraw their names from the Congress, forget that they had an association, but quickly and resolutely give up their immoral trade. Then and not till then, they may take up spinning as discipline, and weaving or any other remunerative and clean occupation for a living.

Young India, 25-6-1925

181. *THREE QUESTIONS*

A gentleman sent me the following three questions for answer at Barisal:

1. Are our fallen sisters entitled to be returned as delegates to the district and provincial conferences or the like representative bodies? If not, how could such delegates be sent from Barisal to the conferences at Perojpur and Jessore?

Under the present constitution of the Congress, even a moral leper *is entitled* to be returned as a delegate, if he can find electors to elect him. But I should not think much of electors who would elect 'fallen sisters' knowing them to be such and whilst they are carrying on their sinful trade. I know nothing of the conferences mentioned.

2. If any individual person or an organized body misappropriates Congress funds or refuses to make over the papers and account-books along with the funds and other properties of the District Congress Committee to the newly elected executive committee duly approved by the B.P.C.C., what steps should be taken to realize the funds and get back the Congress properties?

Although I am still a confirmed non-co-operator, I should have no hesitation, if my entreaty failed, in taking legal proceedings, civil or criminal, against the wrongdoer even though he may be my own father or son. The Congress constitution and resolutions are not designed to defeat the Congress end.

3. How do you account for the fact that Indians and Europeans not excluding high Government officials, that were and still are opposed to the noble cause you espouse and did not join the functions you attended (except to hinder them) during your last Bengal tour, are so very enthusiastic this time over your reception? Is there any reason to believe that these people have since been imbued with the noble spirit of non-violent non-co-operation or does it prove that your power as the greatest political leader of India is on the wane, if not altogether extinct?

I am not aware of the hindrances the Government offered during my last Bengal tour, but the correspondent is entitled to draw the inference if, during the present tour, the authorities are enthusiastic about my receptions now, that "my power as the greatest political leader of India is on the wane, if it is not altogether extinct." But I hope the correspondent will not make the mistake that the authorities, according to him, seem to be

making. For the power of a civil resister is like that of the fabled bird that has the capacity of rising from its own ashes.

Young India, 25-6-1925

182. DUTY OF SATYAGRAHIS

CALCUTTA,
June 25, 1925

We have been asked what is the duty of satyagrahis in view of the recent judgment of the District Court of Hooghly, appointing a Receiver for all the properties including the Temple at Tarakeshwar and purporting to belong to the Mohunt.

In our opinion, it is impossible for satyagrahis to resist the possession by the Receiver when he comes to take it, nor is there any meaning in resisting his possession. The satyagraha was offered against the Mohunt or rather his methods. He is not in possession and the Court's order does not put him in possession. On the contrary, the judgment makes it clear that the Mohunt could not succeed, though he tried in gaining whole or partial possession.

The object of satyagraha was to get rid of abuses in connection with the temple and to secure public entry to the Lakshmi Narain Temple. There is no question under the Court's order of any reversion to the old abuses or prohibition to temple entry. It is a matter of no moment to satyagrahis who has possession so long as the Temple management is pure and it is not the Mohunt who has the management.

The satyagrahis' duty will, therefore, be to hand [over], on demand, the possession to the Receiver. It will be time to reconsider the position when and if abuses creep in. It does not matter who become trustees of the Temple so long as there is a public trust properly managed. If the plaintiffs collude with the Mohunt, it will be again a matter for consideration as to what the satyagrahis should do.

The foregoing was finally approved by Deshbandhu on 8th June at Darjeeling and it was to be published over our joint signatures, if it was considered necessary. I understand that the publication of the statement is necessary. I have therefore no hesitation in permitting its publication as our joint statement. I have seen nothing since to alter my opinion.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-7-1925

183. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF BURDWAN

June 26, 1925

I could not be a true friend, as I regard myself, of Rajas and Maharajas, if I did not tell you that I was hurt by your letter conveying your decision about your subscription to the Memorial Fund. It betrays, may I say, a weak faith in your own countrymen and an incorrect attitude. You have graciously permitted your name to appear as one of the signatories to the appeal. If it signifies anything, it ought to mean a fixed determination on your part to make the collection a success. But the conditions you impose are calculated to defeat the collection. If you, a Maharaja and signatory, have the right to make payment conditional upon the collection reaching a certain total, how much more the humbler signatories? And if they all impose such conditions, how can the collections proceed at all? In all the many subscriptions I have had the privilege of collecting, I have known the signatories to be sureties for the success of funds for which they made themselves sponsors. Will you not revise the wholly incorrect position you have taken up, let me hope, quite unconsciously.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

184. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

June 26, 1925

All you say about Hindu-Mussalman quarrels is too true! I am following the course adopted by the Prophet's companions in Osman's time. They withdrew to the caves when Islam was split up into rival factions. We may figuratively retire into ourselves whilst the two may be fighting like cats and dogs.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

185. SPEECH AT CONDOLENCE MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

June 26, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi then said that the Gujarati community simply did their duty in framing the resolution and nothing more. The 18th day of June was a day when it was an occasion to show mourning at the death of Deshbandhu and he believed most of them present in the meeting had attended the funeral procession of Deshbandhu. He said he had already appealed for raising of a fund of at least ten lacs of rupees to commemorate the memory of Deshbandhu on the lines laid down by him in the document which might be called the will of Deshbandhu. He was at present absorbed in the task and when Seth Anandji Hari Das and other friends approached him requesting him to preside over this function, he had distinctly given them to understand that he expected a response from the Gujarati community to his appeal in a befitting manner. He enquired if they had made any collection to contribute their quota, but was disappointed to see that no such previous arrangement was made. He was a practical man and he did not like to waste a single minute he had at his disposal to raise the fund, and he hoped in the meeting he had come to receive the quota of the Gujarati community to Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. In conclusion he said that it was always his habit to speak frankly and even harshly to his Gujarati brethren, but he was glad his words always met with a kind response from Gujaratis. It was his habit to create rivalry not in bad things but in good things between the different provinces. He was not sure which province would be the first to unfurl the standard of swaraj when swaraj was established. But he felt sure that that province which would perform its duty in its real sense towards the whole country would have the good fortune. It was Gujaratis who had responded splendidly when he had made an appeal for Tilak Swaraj Fund of one crore of rupees and he was glad his appeal this evening to the Gujaratis of Calcutta would not go in vain. He knew the very great depression in trade at present; he, however, had to ask for at least ten lacs of rupees from the Gujarati community and he hoped that the deficit would be made up within the next three or four days left for collection.[2]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-6-1925

[1] The meeting was held at Alfred Theatre in the evening, to mourn the death of C. R. Das. Gandhiji presided and spoke after a condolence resolution had been adopted unanimously.

[2] After the speech was over, a collection for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund was made. The cash and promises to pay amounted to some Rs. 7,000.

186. APPEAL REGARDING DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL SERVICE

I hope that the public will bear in mind the 1st of July. Those who are organizing the Deshbandhu Memorial Service in Calcutta have come to the conclusion that it is necessary to have three meetings—one, a mass meeting in the Maidan, north of Victoria Memorial, another exclusively for ladies at Mirzapur Park, and the third at the Town Hall, where admission would be by tickets. As the functions all over India on the 1st of July are designed to be of a non-party character and as many who did not share Deshbandhu's political opinions have signified their intention of being present at the Memorial Service and of showing their respect for his memory, it has been thought advisable, apart from the mass meeting, to hold the meeting at the Town Hall, which can be attended by people belonging to different parties and where suitable speeches can be made. The difficulty that faces the organizers is to choose names for sending tickets of admission to the Town Hall. There is, I understand, accommodation in the Town Hall only for 1,200 people. A certain number of seats will necessarily have to be reserved. For the balance, applications should be made to Sj. N. C. Sen at 98, Beltola Road, Bhawanipore. They will be received up to Sunday next. And if the number exceeds the accommodation available, lots will be drawn for deciding upon the names of those who should receive admission cards. I know the prejudice that exists against regulating attendance at such public meetings. But I hope that the public will realize the difficulty of the organizers who are anxious to have a representative gathering at the Town Hall. It will not be possible to have many or any speeches at the mass meeting. And yet, it will be a pity if those who wish to express their sentiments are not provided with a platform. This can be had at the Town Hall.

I hope, therefore, that the public will heartily co-operate with the organizers in making the Town Hall function a success. Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan has kindly consented to preside at the Town Hall meeting.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-6-1925

187. FIRST OF JULY

I have suggested that a public meeting should be held in every town and village in memory of Deshbandhu on the occasion of his *shraddha*[1]. On that day people religiously inclined may fast the whole day, or eat only one meal. All the usual ceremonies are being performed in Deshbandhu's family. He loved *kirtans*[2] and, therefore, these are being conducted every night. Those who would like to bathe may do that as well. The important thing, however, is that a meeting should be held exactly at five (standard time, i.e., Madras time) and resolutions should be passed. It would be a good thing to hold a meeting in every place in Gujarat where the message of the Congress can reach. It will be enough to send copies of those resolutions by post to *Ganga-swarup*[3] Basanti Devi. If, in addition, a telegram is despatched from the Provincial Congress Committee giving the names of the towns, she will know where and in how many places meetings were held. The meetings should of course pass condolence resolutions extolling Deshbandhu's virtues. But they can do more than that. We revere Deshbandhu for his services to the cause of swaraj. Deshbandhu's soul will rest in perfect peace if we secure swaraj today. That, however, is beyond our capacity, though it is not beyond our capacity to bring it nearer.

What can all people, the prince and the pauper, capitalists and workers, the old and the young, men and women, Hindus and Muslims, do to bring swaraj nearer? Is there anything which everyone can do? There is certainly one such thing, and that is khadi. Everyone can resolve to wear pure khadi and can take a pledge to spin for half an hour daily by way of *yajna*[4] for the service of country. This is not at all difficult for anyone to do. Having taken such a pledge, everyone should daily remind himself of Deshbandhu's services. If hundreds of thousands of people take this pledge, is there anything we cannot achieve? We can bring about complete boycott of foreign cloth and acquire

[1] The thirteenth and concluding day of the ceremonies which follow the death of a person

[2] Devotional songs sung in chorus

[3] The term prefixed to the name of a widow, among Hindus; literally, in a state like that of the holy Ganga

[4] Sacrifice

self-confidence. Deshbandhu wanted us to have that. We should become self-reliant, for Deshbandhu wanted us to be so. He wanted all of us, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, etc., to unite, and this also we can bring about through the spinning-wheel. I, therefore, wish that everyone should take a pledge to wear khadi and to spin.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

188. SOME MEMORIES

What else could I think of for this issue?

The rock-like Deshbandhu having fallen, the newspapers are full of him. They are even ready to give the smallest details about him. *Servant* has brought out a special issue. *Vasumate*, Bengal's newspaper with the largest circulation, is also preparing to bring out a special issue. Smt. Basanti Devi has received more than a thousand telegrams, and more are pouring in from distant countries. Meetings are being held everywhere. There was hardly any village under Congress influence which did not hold a meeting.

On the 18th, Calcutta was swept by a wave of emotion. Statisticians estimate that not less than two lakhs must have assembled. Men and women stood on the roads, climbed the electric poles and perched on roofs of trams, not to mention the men and women waiting on balconies to catch a glimpse [of the procession].

There were *bhajans* and *kirtans*, it goes without saying. People rained flowers. Deshbandhu's body had been kept open to view, but it lay buried under a mountain of flowers.

At the head of the procession were volunteers, carrying a *fulwari*[1], in which was kept a spinning-wheel decorated with flowers. The procession started from the station at 7.30 [a.m.] and reached the burning-ground at 3 [p.m.]. The cremation began at 3.30.

There were swarming crowds on the burning-ground. It was very difficult to check the crowds pressing from behind. I think that, had not some strong persons lifted me up on their shoulders and placed me in front of the crowd pressing forward, something terrible might have happened. Two or three strong men held me up by turns on their shoulders and from that position I struggled to check the surging crowd and went on entreating them to sit down. They would comply as long as they could see

[1] Floral frame

me, but they took me from spot to spot where there was fear of disturbance and, as soon as my back was turned, the crowd would stand up. The people had lost their senses. Thousands of eyes were fixed on the bier. As the pyre was lit, the people lost all self-control. Involuntarily, the whole crowd stood up and pressed towards the pyre. It was feared that, in a moment, people would be falling on the pyre. What was to be done? I told the people: "Now it is all over, please go back to your homes." I then told the man who was carrying me to take me out of the crowd. I kept on telling the people, suggesting by signs and shouting at them loudly that they should follow me. This succeeded very well with the crowd of thousands and we were saved from a grave danger. The pyre was made up entirely of sandalwood.

It looked as if people had come for a picnic. There was seriousness on their faces, but they did not seem to be distressed. The grief of relatives and of persons like me seemed selfish. My philosophy was found wanting, but the people's had remained unaffected because they were unattached. They were filled with the highest respect [for Deshbandhu], but their devotion had no element of selfishness in it. They had come there to testify to the greatness of a son of the country, of their brother. They seemed to say with their eyes and their movements, "Well done! May there be a thousand others like you."

Deshbandhu was as kind as he was noble. I realized this fully in Darjeeling[1]. He talked about religion, about the things which had impressed him most. He was very keen on having direct spiritual experience. "Whatever may be true about other countries, in this country only the path of non-violence can save us. I will show the young men of Bengal that we can win swaraj by non-violent means." "If we are good, we can make the British Good." "In this atmosphere of darkness and hypocrisy, I can see no way except that of truth. Nor do we need any other." "I wish to bring together all the parties. The only obstacle is the timidity of our people. In trying to bring them together, we run the risk of becoming timid ourselves." "You should try to bring all of them together, meet —[2], see the editor of —[3] and ask him what he gains by abusing the Swaraj Party in your presence. He may point out to me any error or wrong I may have been guilty of. If I do not satisfy him, then he may abuse me to his heart's content." "I am daily growing more convinced about your spinning-wheel. If my

[1] Where Gandhiji stayed with C. R. Das from June 3 to June 6, 1925
[2] & [3] Names omitted in the source

shoulder did not ache and if I were not such a bad pupil in spinning, I would have learnt it sooner. Once I have learnt it, I would not find it boring to do it every day. But I am bored when I try to learn it. See how the thread snaps again and again." "But how can you say that? Is there anything you will not do for swaraj?" "That is true of course. It is not that I refuse to learn. Only, I point out to you my difficulties. Ask Basanti Devi how bad I am at such things." Basanti Devi agreed: "That is true. If he wants to open his box, I have to come to turn the key". I said: "That is your cleverness. In this way you have made him helpless, so that he will have always to flatter you and be dependent on you." The room was filled with laughter. Deshbandhu intervened: "You may examine me after a month. I shall not be drawing ropes then." "All right", I said, "Satish Babu will even send a teacher for you. If you pass [the test], take it that swaraj is at hand." There are so many pleasant incidents like this that, if I tried to describe all of them, I should never end.

There are some memories which I simply cannot narrate.

I would be ungrateful if I did not try to give some description of the love I had been receiving at [Darjeeling]. He took personal interest in the smallest matters. He would himself order dry fruits from Calcutta. As it would be difficult to secure goats or goats' milk in Darjeeling, he had got five from the plains and kept them where he was staying. He would not let me manage without any of the things to which I was used. There was only a wall between our two rooms. Every morning, he would wait for me as soon as he was free. He would be in bed, for he could not leave it. He knew my manner of sitting cross-legged, and so would not let me sit on the chair, but would make me sit on his bed facing him. He would get some more mattresses spread and also have cushions placed for me. I could not help joking: "This scene reminds me of a day forty years' ago when I got married, the bride and I sat like this on a plank. All that remains is holding each other's hands." I had hardly finished this when the whole house rang with Deshbandhu's laughter. Whenever he laughed, the sound of his laughter could be heard from a great distance.

Deshbandhu was daily becoming gentler. Custom did not forbid him meat or fish. But when the non-co-operation movement started he gave up meat eating, drinking and smoking, all three. Later these things came back, but his inclination was always for giving them up. Recently, again, he had come into contact with a sadhu of the Radhaswami sect and after that his eagerness to adopt vegetarian food had increased. When, therefore, I

visited him at Darjeeling, he again started the experiment of vegetarian diet, and while I was there, he did not allow meat and fish in the house. He told me several times: "If I can manage, I will never eat meat or fish now. I do not like eating them, and I realize that they obstruct our spiritual growth. My guru was very particular about this matter and told me that, in the interest of the spiritual effort I have undertaken, I must give up meat-eating."

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 28-6-1925

189. EXPERIMENT IN KATHIAWAR

Writing about the experiment which is being conducted in Kathiawar, the Secretary of the Conference says:[1]

From my experience in Bengal, I see that if we had there the means of making the experiment which is being made in Kathiawar, people would flock to buy slivers on these conditions. No, I forget. There is no need at all to supply slivers in Bengal, for there are many people who spin, card cotton and make slivers themselves. We should only have to give them cotton at half price and weaving charges would have to be at half the usual rate. Many of them are ready to produce yarn if they are supplied cotton pods, since they know ginning and actually do it. In Kathiawar, the entire stock of slivers has been sold off. Let us wait for the results.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 28-6-1925

[1] The letter is not translated here. It gave particulars of the progress made in the scheme of khadi production undertaken by the Kathiawar Political Conference.

190. LONG LIVE DESHBANDHU!

I had the good fortune of being in Bombay when the Lokamanya passed away. Providence favoured me also on the day when Deshbandhu was cremated, or, rather, Fate seemed to have waited for the first lap of my tour to be over, for had the cremation taken place one day earlier, I would not have been able to witness the scene which I did in Calcutta.

Just as the citizens of Bombay had abandoned themselves to grief on the day of the Lokamanya's death, so did the people of Calcutta on this day. At that time, countless men and women had come out to have *darshan*, to weep and express their love. Now, as then, there was no community or race whose members were not present to honour the departed. When the train arrived at the station, there was not an inch of space on the platform. People vied with one another for the honour of carrying Deshbandhu's bier, as they had for the Lokamanya's.

On both these occasions, it was the people's rule. The crowds were not ruled by the police, but the latter of their own free will were ruled by the people. The authority of the Government was voluntarily suspended and the people's rule was in force. On that day, people did what they chose. What Deshbandhu wanted to see people doing when he was alive, they did on the day of his leaving this world for the next.

Is this an object-lesson of small value? Is there anything which the bond of love will not make people do? On that day, they "endured hardships, bore hunger and thirst, cold and heat", and did it all cheerfully. It was not necessary to plead with them and persuade them to suffer what they did.

No such crowds collect on the death of an emperor. People do not notice the death of a sannyasi, nor do newspapers and news agencies. Urged by what sense of duty, then, had the old and the young, men and women, the rich and the poor, Hindus and Muslims gathered there, uninvited, in the twinkling of an eye? It was their sense of duty to the nation. People will in these days describe only those who do this duty as men imbued with the spirit of dharma. They are even ready to forget the weaknesses of those who follow this dharma. There is some meaning in this. People are not foolish in acting thus. God alone is perfect. Every human being is liable to err. If, however, any person does his

own proper duty to the best of his ability, his weaknesses will not be noticed and, as he goes on doing his duty, they will ultimately disappear.

National service is the only dharma today, for unless we follow that we can follow no other. The power of the State has penetrated every aspect of national life. In countries where the power of the State is the power of the people, the subjects are happy on the whole, and where the State is hostile to the people, the latter are miserable and utterly weak. In such countries the people lead a sinful life and call it good, for those who live in fear are incapable of goodness. To free ourselves from this paralysing fear, i.e., to learn the first lesson in self-realization, is what we call the dharma of national service. What have our patriotic leaders been teaching us? That we should not fear even a king, that we are men and men need fear God alone. Neither King George V nor his representatives can inspire fear in them. The Lokamanya had abandoned all fear of the State's machinery of law and order and, therefore, he was the adored of the people, even of learned men, for he inspired them with courage. Deshbandhu had also completely shed fear of the Government. To his mind, the Viceroy and the gate-keeper were equal. He had seen with his inner eye that, everything considered, there was no difference between the two. If it is unmanly to fear the Viceroy, so is it to try to overcome the gate-keeper. There is a profound spiritual vision behind this attitude, and that is the meaning of the dharma of national service. For this reason, consciously or unconsciously and even against their will, people look with reverence upon those who follow this dharma. The Lokamanya was a Brahmin. His knowledge of the scriptures was such as humbled the pride of pundits. But he was not adored for that knowledge of his. Deshbandhu was not a Brahmin. He was a Vaisya. But people never thought about what caste he belonged to. Deshbandhu did not know Sanskrit and had not studied the scriptures. He merely followed the dharma of national service. He had made himself completely fearless. That is why even learned men bowed to him and, on that unforgettable day, they mingled their tears with the people's. The dharma of national service means all-embracing love. It is not universal love, but it is an important facet of it. It is not the Dhavalgiri of love, but its Darjeeling. From Darjeeling, the visitor has a golden vision of Dhavalgiri and thinks to himself: 'If the Darjeeling of love is so beautiful as this, how much more beautiful must be its Dhavalgiri, which shines in the distance

before me.' Love of one's country is not opposed to love of mankind, but is a concrete instance of it. It ultimately lifts one to the highest peak of universal love. That is why people shower blessings on those who are filled with patriotic love. People know love of family, and are not, therefore, moved to admiration by it. To some extent they also understand love of the village. But love of the country only a Deshbandhu or a Lokamanya understands. People adore such men because they themselves want to be like them.

Deshbandhu's liberality knew no restraints. He earned lakhs and spent lakhs. He never refused to give, even borrowed and gave. He fought for the poor in courts without charging any fees. It is said that in Aurobindo Ghosh's[1] case he exhausted himself and his resources for nine months. He spent from his own pocket and did not charge a single pie. This large-heartedness, too, was the result of his patriotism.

If he opposed me, it was certainly not that he wanted to harass me or undermine my position; he did so only for the sake of national service. He, who did not fear the Viceroy, was not likely to be afraid of me. His attitude was that if the activities of even his brother obstructed the progress of the country, he would oppose him. This should be the attitude of all of us. Our differences were like the differences between brothers. Neither of us wanted to part company with the other for ever. If we did, we would have shown ourselves wanting in patriotism. Hence, even when we seemed to drift away from each other, we were drawing closer. Our situation was a test of the quality of our hearts. Deshbandhu has passed that test, but I have still to show that I have passed it. I must keep undiminished my love for Deshbandhu and for other co-workers. If I fail in that, I shall have failed in the test.

Deshbandhu's progress, during the last three or four months of his life was marvellous. Many must have had experience of his hot temper. His gentleness of which I had experience at Faridpur[2] went on increasing. The Faridpur speech was not written without due thought. It was a beautiful flower of mature thought. I observed him making progress even beyond that point. In

[1] 1872-1950; mystic, poet and philosopher; since 1910 lived at Pondicherry where he established an ashram. He was one of the 23 accused in the Alipore Bomb Case for which the regular trial started in October, 1908.

[2] Where Bengal Provincial Agricultural Conference was held in May 1925 under the presidentship of C. R. Das

Darjeeling, he had reached the fullest limit on this new direction. I never weary of describing my experiences during those five days. Everything that he did and said seemed to breathe love. His optimism was becoming stronger. He could be caustic about his enemies but I found no evidence of this during those five days. In fact he spoke about many of them but I found no bitter word in anything he said. Sir Surendranath's opposition had remained unchanged, but even for him Deshbandhu had nothing but regard. He wanted to win over Sir Surendranath's heart. He wished that I, too, should try to do that. His advice was: "Try to win over as many as you can."

We talked at great length about how to carry on the struggle henceforward, what the Swaraj Party should do and what place the spinning-wheel occupied in the programme. We also drew up a plan of work for Bengal. That may even be put into execution. But where are the men to carry it out?

I left Darjeeling with a light heart. My fears had disappeared. I could see my path clearly before me—the path of swaraj. But now the horizon is overcast with clouds. I was in a fright when the Lokamanya passed away. So far I had to plead only with one, but from now on, I thought, I would have to plead with many. I could explain my problems to him and seek his help to solve them. Instead, I would now have to discuss them with several leaders, and even then, I knew, they would not be able to solve them. The time had come when I had to wipe their tears.

The passing away of Deshbandhu has left me in greater difficulties. Deshbandhu meant Bengal. His consent was as good as a draft in my hand which I could cash without further difficulty. So far, my difficulties at the passing of Deshbandhu are similar to those at the passing away of the Lokamanya. But when the latter died, the path before us was clear. People had been filled with new hopes. They wanted to try their strength and make new experiments. Hindus and Muslims seemed to have become united.

But what is the position now? The sky overhead and the earth below. I have no fresh ideas to put forward. Hindus and Muslims are getting ready to fight each other. In the name of religion, they seem to have forgotten the dharma of national service. Brahmins and non-Brahmins are also fighting with each other. The Government believes that it can now do what it likes in the country. Civil disobedience seems to be far away. At this time, one would feel the passing of any great soldier, but that of Das with his ten hands is a loss impossible to bear.

However, I believe in God and therefore, have not lost heart. God may sport with us as He wills. Why should we be miserable or happy because of anything He may do? Why should it make any difference to us if events over which we have no control end in one way rather than in another? I understand my duty. Maybe my understanding of it is wrong, but so long as I am convinced that it is my duty I should do it, and when I have done it my responsibility is over. I console myself with such attempts at philosophical reflection. My selfishness simply does not let me forget that I shall see Deshbandhu no more.

But how can Deshbandhu die? His physical frame has passed away. But can his virtues die? They still live. If we but cultivate them in ourselves, he lives in all of us. One who has served the world can never die. It is wrong to say that Rama and Krishna have left this world. Both live in the hearts of the thousands of their devotees. The same is true of Harishchandra[1] and others. By Harishchandra we do not mean his physical body; we mean truth. He still lives in countless Harishchandras who serve truth. So does Deshbandhu. His mortal body has perished. His spirit of service, his liberality, his love of the country, his self-sacrifice, his fearlessness—can we say that these, too, have perished? They will go on increasing in strength among the people, whether in greater or smaller measure.

And so Deshbandhu lives, though dead. As long as India lives, Deshbandhu lives. Let us, therefore, say, "Long live Deshbandhu!"

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 28-6-1925

191. "GANGA-SWARUP" BASANTI DEVI

Some years ago I described my meeting[2] with the late Ramabai Ranade. I had known her as an ideal widow.

This time Fate has decreed that I should describe a great hero's wife beginning to lead a widow's life.

I have known Basanti Devi since the year 1919. I came closer to her in 1921. I had heard a great deal about her goodness, her intelligence and her hospitality, and also had some experience

[1] Legendary King of Ayodhya who gave up his wife, son, kingdom and wealth for the sake of truth

[2] *Vide* Vol. XVII, 423-5.

of them. As I drew closer to Deshbandhu in Darjeeling, so did I to Basanti Devi. In her widowhood, I have come much closer to her. I have been practically by her side from the day they came from Darjeeling to Calcutta with Deshbandhu's body. My first meeting with her as a widow was in her son-in-law's house. She sat surrounded by a number of women. In the old days, as soon as I entered the house she herself would come out to receive and welcome me. Now that she was a widow, who would talk to me? I had to recognize her in the midst of all those women sitting as still as statues. For a minute, my eyes searched for her. Vermilion at the parting of the hair, *tika* on the forehead, betel-leaf in the mouth, bangles on the wrists, a bordered sari and a smiling face—without any of these signs how could I recognize Basanti Devi? I went and sat where I thought she should be and scanned the face. The sight was too much. Yes, I recognized the face. I found it difficult to keep back my tears, let alone hardening my heart and offering consolation.

Where was today the usual smile on her face? I tried in many ways to console her, to cheer her up and make her speak. After a long time I succeeded a little.

Devi smiled faintly.

That gave me courage and I said, "You cannot weep. If you do, others also will weep. We have quietened Mona (elder daughter) with the utmost difficulty. As for Baby (younger daughter) you know her condition. Sujata (daughter-in-law) has been crying uncontrollably and has barely stopped. You should have compassion on these. We want you to do many things yet."

The brave woman replied with great firmness of mind: "I will not weep. How can I, when tears don't come?" I understood what this meant and was satisfied. Crying lightens the heart. But this bereaved sister did not want to lighten her grief. She wanted to bear the burden. So, why should she weep? How could I say, now: "Come, let us brother and sister weep and pour out our grief to each other?"

A Hindu widow is an image of suffering. She has taken upon herself the misery of the world. She has learnt to find happiness in suffering, has accepted suffering as sacred.

Basanti Devi had no objection to eating any type of food. In the period of her life up to 1920, all manner of delicacies were cooked in her kitchen and hundreds of people feasted in her house. She could not go without *pan* even for an hour. A box containing betel-leaves was always to be found with her.

And, now, she has given up all adornment, given up betel-leaves, sweet dishes and meat and fish too. All the time, her thoughts are fixed on her husband and on God.

I plead with many women to pay less attention to adorning their person, ask many of them to give up addictions. Rarely does any give up these things. But think what a widow does? The moment a Hindu woman becomes a widow, she gives up addictions and lays aside jewellery and other adornments as the snake casts off its slough. She needs neither persuasion nor help from anyone for doing that. Is there anything which custom does not make easy?

Is it a virtue or a sin to suffer in this way? We do not find this practice among the followers of any other religion. Could the authors of the Hindu Shastras have made a mistake? When I see Basanti Devi, I do not think they have; I see in the practice the purest spirit of dharma. The widow's manner of life is the glory of Hinduism. Let the world say what it will, the life of dharma has its glory in renunciation, not in enjoyment.

But what is that widow's life which the Hindu Shastras admire and praise? Certainly not that of the fifteen-year-old girl who does not know even the meaning of marriage. For a girl married and widowed in childhood, a widow's life means not virtue, but sin. If the god of love should himself try to tempt Basanti Devi, he would be burnt to ashes. Basanti Devi has a third eye, like Siva's. But what does a fifteen-year-old girl know about the beauty of widowhood? For her, such a life is cruelty. In the increasing number of such widows, I see the destruction of Hinduism. In women like Basanti Devi leading the customary life of widows, I see a source of strength for dharma. There is no inviolable law that in all circumstances, in all places and at all times a widow must remain a widow and lead a widow's life. This is a dharma only for a woman who can follow it.

It is good to swim in the waters of tradition, but to sink in them is suicide.

There should be the same rule for men as for women. Rama acted in this manner. He could not bear separation from Sita, whom he had sent away. He himself sent her away and yet suffered for what he had done. After she had left, he gradually lost the light and power which were his. He abandoned Sita physically, but installed her as the queen of his heart. From that time onwards, he felt no interest in dressing himself well or in other kingly pleasures. He attended, disinterestedly, to the affairs of his kingdom as a matter of duty and lived a peaceful life.

Hinduism will remain imperfect as long as men do not accept suffering as Basanti Devi did and, like her, withdraw their interest from the pleasures of this life. Sweets to the one and thorns to the other—such perverted justice can never be, and is not, acceptable in God's court. But among the Hindus at present, disregarding the divine law, men have ordained perpetual widowhood for women and conferred on themselves the right to fix marriage with another partner, on the cremation-ground itself.

Basanti Devi has not till now shed a drop of tear in anyone's presence. Even then, the light on her face has not returned. It seems as dull as if she had recovered from a long illness. Seeing her in this condition, I requested her to go out with me for a little fresh air. She did come along with me and sat in the car but did not speak a word. I talked about many things. She listened, but hardly said anything in reply. She had a drive, but felt miserable afterwards. She could not sleep the whole night. "Cursed that I am, I enjoyed today what was so dear to me. Is this all that my grief comes to?" She spent the whole night in such thoughts. Bhombal (her son) came and told me about this. Today is my silence day. I simply wrote on a piece of paper: "We must cure mother of this madness. There are many things which our beloved one may have loved and which we have no choice but to do. Mother did not have a drive for enjoyment, she had it for the sake of her health. She was in great need of fresh air. We must strengthen her and take care of her health. We must keep her alive so that we may be worthy of the legacy of Father's work and carry it forward. Convey this to Mother."

He said: "Mother had asked me not to tell you this. But I could not help telling you; so I have come. It would be better if, for some time, you did not ask her to go out in a car."

Poor Bhombal! He who would not be controlled by anyone, God bless him, has become today as meek as a lamb.

But what should we think about this good widow? Widowhood may be cherished but it appears unbearable. Sudhanva[1] kept dancing in the cauldron of boiling oil but a person like me, watching the scene, would tremble with the thought of his agony. May chaste and virtuous women ever cling to their suffering. Their suffering is not suffering, but happiness. Think-

[1] Son of King Hansadhwaj of Champavati in the *Mahabharata*. He was thrown into boiling oil for disobeying his father, who was an atheist, but he came out unscathed because of his devotion to God.

ing of them, many have found deliverance and many more will find it in future.

Jai Basanti Devi!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

192. WHO IS TO BLAME?

A volunteer writes:[1]

I realize the truth of these words everywhere here in Bengal. It is only recently that we thought of going into the villages. At first, we wanted things from the village people. It is only now that we are going to the villages in order to give the people something. How can we expect to win their confidence in such a short time? It often happens that a father takes years to win his son's confidence. We have to win back our honoured place among the village people, and will get nothing through impatience. Some persons serve their own interests under the guise of service. What other means do the village people have, except experience, to distinguish between such persons and genuine workers? Public workers, therefore, must cultivate patience, forbearance, selflessness and such other virtues. The masses can have no other knowledge but experience to guide them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

193. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

June 29, 1925

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter[2] and the article on "Father Forgive Them" passage. I must have the original letter before I can make use of your article. Please search and send. I am fixed up in Bengal till the end of July. I hope Barasaheb[3] is suffering less pain.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated on the basis of his experience that, if villagers did not trust workers, the fault lay with the latter.

[2] This is not available.

[3] Presumably, Sushil Kumar Rudra, who was ailing

Pray give him my love and tell him I constantly think of him.

Yours,
MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
C/O PRINCIPAL S. RUDRA
SOLON
SIMLA HILLS

From the original: C.W. 6049

194. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Monday [June 29, 1925][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

If I do not write this postcard, I am afraid, I may not be able to write at all. I have your beautiful letter. Your style and Gujarati both are excellent. It would be nice if you start writing something for *Y. I.* and *N. J.* I am busy collecting funds. Krishnadas has not received the letters. It is good that Ba spins. I too cannot tell you the names and particulars of all the progeny of Ota Gandhi. It is well that you have started collecting this literature. I have heard that Uttamchand Bapa had six sons. Khushalbhai may be able to give you more information. Tell Bal Gangadhar that I am very happy that he has come. I have no misgivings whatever about him. Doing good to others never harms anyone. Even the mistakes of Balkrishna lead ultimately to his advancement.

I am celebrating the *shraddha* of Deshbandhu in the most fitting way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2045

[1] The postmark is "Kalighat, June 30, '25". Monday was June 29.

195. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [June 29, 1925][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I have written something quite differently about Alwar this time. I am afraid it will take a little time to decide about my going there. I think it will be possible to go only in the beginning of August. I intend to pass the last week of July in the Ashram and then start the tour. I am sure you will come on the 16th. I hope you received the wires I sent there to you and to Sabarmati.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2854

196. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [June 29, 1925][2]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You should look out for various occasions to serve Father. As a matter of fact you hardly have to search for them. Nevertheless I understand what you say. Since Dahyabhai attends Navajivan office let him work there diligently. He will derive much benefit by working under Swami's[3] discipline. That is good education; even if he is asked to work as a labourer, he should do it conscientiously. I shall drop in some time at Ahmedabad, but God knows when I shall be able to do so. Do keep me informed about Father's health. If Father is weak in spelling, should you too be so? One must emulate one's father's virtues, never his weaknesses.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 26

[1] The postmark is "Calcutta, June 30, '25". Monday was June 29.
[2] As in the source
[3] Swami Anandanand; then manager of Navajivan Press

197. TELEGRAM TO SUDHIR RUDRA[1]

CALCUTTA,
June 30, 1925

MY HEART, MY PRAYERS WITH YOU IN YOUR GRIEF. GOD WILL GIVE YOU ALL STRENGTH BEAR LOSS. LOVE.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 6050. Courtesy: Mrs. S. K. Rudra, Allahabad

198. SPEECH AT UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, CALCUTTA[2]

June 30, 1925

Mahatmaji . . . paid a glowing tribute to Deshbandhu. He said that Deshbandhu was always a warrior from top to toe. He had been engaged in many a battle and had never spared his adversaries. He had never, so far as he remembered, taken undue advantage of anybody. He would never forget his last five days' stay with Deshbandhu at Darjeeling because he came to realize what was noble in his life. He had no ill will towards any of his opponents. Deshbandhu was always anxious to co-operate with everybody in working for the good of his country. Chittaranjan Das conquered the whole country with sincere love and he was decorated with the title "Deshbandhu". The country had shown to him a sincere respect for his great sacrifice which he did for the good of his countrymen. Throughout his tour in East Bengal Mahatmaji came in contact with thousands of people young and old and by their feeling he could understand what affection, love and respect they had for Deshbandhu Das. He was still receiving hundreds of letters daily from the students who paid homage to his sacred and loving memory. Deshbandhu was a father to the young men of Bengal, and always took every one of them under his protection for life. In his death Mahatmaji thought that whole student community had lost their true leader who could lead them to their goal if God had kept him alive for a few days more. His generosity was boundless and his love for the students was also boundless. Proceeding, the speaker said he did not come to the meeting to sing the praises of that

[1] This was sent on S. K. Rudra's death. It was delivered to the addressee at Solon on July 1.

[2] A large number of students and leading citizens of Calcutta attended the meeting at which Gandhiji presided.

great son of Mother India, but he wanted the youth of Bengal to realize with gratitude what Deshbandhu had done for them. He was confident that the youth of Bengal would help him in raising a suitable memorial for Deshbandhu Das. The speaker did not want them to come forward with their money but he advised them to go to their parents, friends and relations and collect money for the purpose. In conclusion, the Mahatma asked the young men of Bengal to finish the work which Deshbandhu had left unfinished to attain swaraj.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-7-1925

199. APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND[2]

July 1, 1925

My capacity for writing original articles on the same subject is strictly limited. I must, therefore, turn to good account the request of the editor to write something on Deshbandhu. I am more concerned with making the best use of the wonderful appreciations that have already appeared than adding one more from me. As heirs to the great legacy left by him, we must deserve it by our action. I gratefully acknowledge the response from hundreds of men and women to the memorial fund. But it has got to come from thousands and tens of thousands if we are to reach ten lacs, as we must, within a short time. I hope that those who see these lines will not wait for a call, but will quickly send their subscription—not the least they can, but the best that is possible. They may collect, too, from their friends. Then they need no authority. They can become self-appointed volunteers. Here there is economy of time, maximum of results and minimum of chance of fraud.

I know that people are impatient to attain swaraj. Some think that a hospital as a memorial to Deshbandhu is a poor honour done to the memory of one who gave his life for swaraj. These do not know Deshbandhu. For him every noble deed done by an Indian was a step towards swaraj. Every successful corporate effort is a big step towards swaraj. We must have poli-

[1] A sum of about Rs. 2,500 was collected on the spot and the purse was handed over to Gandhiji as the first instalment of the contribution of the members of the Institute.

[2] This was reproduced from the special "Deshbandhu Number" of *Forward,* 1-7-1925.

tical power. It cannot long be withheld from us. But that power, whenever it comes, will be the ripe fruit of the labours of many for a common end. The collection of the fund, especially if it comes from lacs, be it in ever so small a coin, will be a striking demonstration not merely of the genuine love of the people but also of our organizing ability. To contribute therefore to the fund is for the time being the best appreciation of Deshbandhu.

The Hindustan Times, 14-7-1925

200. SPEECH ON THE "SHRADDHA" DAY OF C. R. DAS

CALCUTTA,
July 1, 1925

I speak often in the Ashram, but then it is before my own people; they understand and bear with me. Moreover, as occasion arises, I quote something from the *Gita*, and even then the talk would not be called a religious discourse. To me religion means living in the way prescribed by religion. A discourse may be in place occasionally, but not every religious man can give one. It is true, though, that anyone who gives such discourses should himself be a man of dedicated religious life.

The *Gita* is for me a perennial guide to conduct. From it I seek support for all my actions and, if, in a particular case, I do not find the needed support, I would refrain from the proposed action or at any rate feel uncertain about it. So, when despite my embarrassment I accepted the invitation to speak, I decided to say something about the meaning of birth and death. Every time I have suffered the loss of a relative or friend, I sought consolation in the *Gita*; and the one thing it teaches is that death is nothing to be mourned. If ever I have shed tears, it has been through weakness, it was in spite of myself. When I think how I was shocked at the news of Deshbandhu's death and how tears welled up in my eyes, I ascribe all that to my weakness. Let us look in the *Gita* today for some comfort.

I have often stated that the *Gita* is a great allegory. I simply cannot think that the battle it describes was an actual battle between two armies, and this belief of mine was confirmed when I read the *Mahabharata* in jail. The *Mahabharata* itself seems to me to be a great treatise on dharma. It contains historical incidents, but it is not history. When, for instance, we read about

sarpasatra[1], can we rest in its literal meaning? We should, then, have to swallow enough superstitions to choke us to death. The poet himself has warned us so emphatically, that he is not a historian. The *Gita*, then, describes the conflict within us; it is true that for this purpose it has used some historical incidents, but the aim behind them is to kindle a light in our hearts and impel us to examine them with its help. When you reach the concluding part of Chapter II, it becomes impossible even to suspect that the poem describes a historical battle. It seems strange that Arjuna should want to know the marks of a man firmly established in spiritual vision and that the Lord should explain them to a person all set for a battle.

But what I want to do is to explain to you the meaning of death. If you believe with me that the *Gita* is an allegory, you will also be able to understand the meaning of death as explained in it:

> What is non-Being is never known to have been, and what is Being is never known not to have been. Of both these the secret has been seen by the seers of the truth.[2]

This verse contains the whole meaning. Verse after verse states that the body is *asat*. *Asat* does not mean *maya*[3]; to say that the body is *asat* does not mean that it never came into existence at all; the statement simply means that it is transitory, perishable, that it is subject to change. And yet, we live our life as if it would last for ever. We worship it, we cling to it—all this is contrary to the teaching of Hinduism. If Hinduism has asserted anything in the clearest possible terms, it is that the body and all that we behold is *asat*. But there are probably no other people who fear death and cry and grieve over it as much as we do. In the *Mahabharata*, in fact, it is stated that lamentation after someone's death gives pain to the departed soul, and the *Gita*, too, was composed to remove the fear of death. Man's body wears out through continuous activity and death releases it from suffering. The more I think about the ceaselessly active life of Deshbandhu, the more I feel that he is alive today. While he lived in the body, he was not fully alive, but he is so today. In our selfishness, we believed that his body was all that mattered, whereas the *Gita* teaches—and I understand the truth of this more clearly as days pass—that all worry about a perishable thing is meaningless, is so much waste of time.

[1] Serpent sacrifice

[2] *Bhagawad Gita*, II, 16

[3] Illusion

Non-Being simply does not exist, and Being never ceases to exist. Shakespeare was wrong when he said that the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones.[1] The good and the true alone live for ever. The world remembers only those who did some good while they lived in it. It readily forgets that which was false and evil, and preserves only what is good. Take the example of Ramachandra. Personally, I believe him to be an incarnation of God, but I do not believe that he was guilty of no error while he lived in the body. Today, however, we regard him as perfect. Krishna, too, we regard as the plenary incarnation of Godhead. Among the millions of Hindus, you will not find today a single person who will see error in anything which Rama or Krishna did. This fact, too, reveals the meaning of the verse "What is non-Being is never known to have been". The world has preserved only what was imperishable in them, and no one knows anything about the perishable elements—their errors, if they committed any. We want to follow Deshbandhu's example. Is it his life in the body which we should follow as an example? Was it his body we adored? If that was so, would his dear, dear son light the fire which consumed it?

And so, in that verse, the *Gita* declares in the most emphatic language that we should follow truth in our lives and keep away from the unreal and the false, from deception. Very often our words do not express the truth, they become a form of deception. Anger is a form of untruth, desire, attachment, pride; all these are forms of untruth. We have to perform the *satra* of all these snakes. A living snake harms only the body, but these snakes infect every fibre in our being and threaten to harm even the *atman*. This, however, is never harmed. It never dies. If we know what is meant by *sat*, we shall also understand the real meaning of birth and death. The chemists say that when a candle burns nothing is destroyed; similarly, when the body dies and is consumed by fire, nothing is destroyed. Birth and death are two conditions of the same reality. It is wholly because of our selfishness that we lament the death of our dear one. When on that day I saw the crowds on the cremation-ground and observed no sigh of grief on their faces, for a moment I felt irritated, angry because they seemed to lack sense and did not even understand the gravity of the hour. But a little later I realized that it was they who were right. They had come there not with any selfish motive but merely to honour

[1] *Julius Caesar*, III, ii. 75-6

a noble life, to bear testimony to Deshbandhu's services and express their admiration for the supreme achievement of his life. Their joy had more truth and meaning in it than our grief. All admiration to the revered Basanti Devi, whom I did not even recognize when I first met her [after Deshbandhu's death], because she shed no tears before me. However, even one's face should not be touched with grief, one should have no feeling of sadness or gloom. Only if we have such a faith can it be said that we have understood the transitoriness of the body. It is not to the body that one is married. In marriage, two souls come together not to seek bodily pleasure but to strive for their own growth and refinement. When the body of one partner disappears, the union becomes all the closer. We have assembled today, therefore, not to shed tears. Let us, rather, think of Deshbandhu's virtues, the substance of his which will never die, and take them into our own lives.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 12-7-1925

201. A STRING OF QUESTIONS

1. In the account of your interview with some gentlemen belonging to the untouchable class at Faridpur, published in the issue of the *Young India* dated 14th May, 1925, you have asked them to do things by way of self-purification. Now what do you think by self-purification? What are the outer manifestations of self-purification? Does the self-purification consist in *kayik*, *manasik* and *vachanik* purification[1] or one of them alone?

Self-purification means cleansing oneself of all impurities whether of the mind, speech or body. The 'untouchable' friends were asked to think no evil, speak no untruth or abuse and to keep the body pure by careful wash, pure food and avoidance of carrion or other impure food or intoxicating liquors or drugs.

2. If any class or individual attains that standard, can they or he be treated as untouchable?

Even if a person does not attain the standard and it is unattainable at once by most of us, he may not be regarded as an untouchable. It would go hard with us if that standard was applied to us.

[1] Purification of the body, mind and speech

3. There is no unity in food, drink or worship among all the Hindu classes. What do you think to be the first step to bring about that unity?

I am doing nothing to achieve such unity. Unity I hanker after is one of heart. It transcends these barriers and can subsist in spite of them. We worship the same God under diverse forms and names.

4. It is suggested that if entrance into public places of worship and confectionery shops be opened to sanitary, clean Hindus, that will be the first step to bring about unity. What is your opinion about it?

Places of public worship should be open to all who obey the laws of common decency. Who shall judge the standard of cleanliness in dress? These things are regulated not by law but by public opinion. A confectioner, if he is himself clean, would undoubtedly refuse to sell to those who are dirty. If he did not, he would lose his custom. But a confectioner who refuses to sell to an untouchable because he is so called, forfeits his right to carry on his business.

5. Your sense of untouchability is a difficult one. Even among higher-class Hindus, they do not drink water and eat cooked food from the hands of their *asanskrit* children. Do you call this untouchability?

I do not call that untouchability. I have explained scores of times that there is no such thing as a fifth *varna* in Hinduism. The untouchable, therefore, should have all the rights common to the four *varnas*.

6. Some suggest that instead of putting too much stress on the drinking of water, it is better to try to remove the sense of superiority and inferiority from the heart of higher-caste Hindus and increase mutual love and help. Do you approve of this suggestion?

I do approve of the suggestion where it is not made to cover hypocrisy. You shall judge a tree by its fruit. I never lay stress on drinking and eating. But I do and would when a man refuses to drink at the hands of an untouchable because he is so called. For, then, the refusal *is* a sign of arrogation of superiority.

7. To that end spread of *Vaishnava* teachings by religious *kirtans* and religious feasting in a body irrespective of creed and caste is an easy and simple method. This method has been in vogue for more than four centuries. What is your opinion about this suggestion?

I have not studied the effect of these *kirtans*. But I would welcome any good method that will break down the wall of insolent superiority.

8. It is almost admitted that the Hindus of Bengal are a dying race. What do you think to be the principal causes of this gradual decay? What are the preventives of this decay? It is also admitted that there has been physical deterioration among the Hindus in height, strength and vitality. How to revive them?

I have seen the statements but I have seen no proof of Hindu deterioration. I should, however, believe the assertion that we are becoming physically weaker. The reasons are obvious. Our growing poverty and early marriages are two substantial causes for the decay. The one can be remedied by the charkha and the other by individuals resolutely refusing to marry their children, whether male or female, till they are over sixteen and nearer twenty. The later the better. I would run almost every imaginable risk and postpone marriage till a boy or girl is well advanced and is capable of shouldering the burden and is perfectly healthy. The way to do it is for those who feel the necessity of reform to initiate it themselves and advocate it among their neighbours. Those who desire the reform and would minimize chances of risk must bring up their children in healthier and purer surroundings than they have at present.

Young India, 2-7-1925

202. *MY INCAPACITY*

It would be most comfortable for my pride if I could give every applicant for help the satisfaction he may desire. But here is a sample of my hopeless incapacity.

> Of what use is your leadership or Mahatmaship if you cannot stop cow-killing by asking the Mussalmans to stop it? Look at your studied silence on the Alwar atrocities and your criminal silence about the affront put by the Nizam upon Panditji whom you delight to call your respected elder brother and one of the first among the public servants and whom you have yourself acquitted of any malice against Mussalmans.

Thus have argued not the same but several persons. The first rebuke mentioned was the last to be received and it has proved the proverbial last straw. There is a telegram before me asking me to request the Mussalmans not to kill cows as sacrifice on *Bakr-Id.* I thought it was time for me at least to offer an explanation over my silence. I was prepared to live down the charge regarding Panditji, although it was a charge brought by a dear friend. He was almost apprehensive about my fame. He thought I would be

accused of fear of Mussalmans and what not. But I was firm in my resolve not to take any public notice of the ban on Panditji. There was no fear of his misunderstanding me. And I knew that he stood in no need of my protection. He will survive all the bans that can be declared against him by any temporal power. His philosophy is his stay. I have watched him at close quarters amid many a crisis. He has stood unmoved. He knows his work and prosecutes it without elation or perturbation in fair weather or foul. I, therefore, laughed to my heart's content when I heard of the ban. Strange are the ways of potentates. Nothing that I could write in the pages of *Young India* would, I knew, induce H.E.H. the Nizam to recall his fiat. If I had the honour of a personal acquaintance, I would have straightway written to the ruler of Hyderabad respectfully telling him that the ban on Panditji could do no good to his State, much less to Islam. I would have even advised him to offer Panditji his hospitality when he went to Hyderabad and could have cited such examples from the lives of the Prophet and his companions. But I do not possess that honour. And I knew that a public reference by me might not even reach his ears. Save, therefore, for adding to the acerbity already existing, it could have served no purpose. And as I could not add to it, even if I could not diminish it, I chose to be silent. And my present reference I propose to use for the sake of advising such Hindus as would listen to me not to feel irritated over the incident nor to make it a cause of complaint against Islam or Mussalmans. It is not the Mussalman in the Nizam that is responsible for the ban. Arbitrary procedure is an attribute of autocracy whether it be Hindu or Mussalman. We must devise means of checking autocratic vagaries without seeking to destroy the Indian States. The remedy is cultivation of enlightened and forceful public opinion. The process must begin, as it has begun, in British India proper; because it is naturally freer, being administered directly, unlike the States which are administered through the vassals of the Emperor. They, therefore, reproduce the evils of the British system without containing the few safeguards that direct British administration provides for its own sake. In the Indian States, therefore, orderliness depends more upon the personal character and whims of the chiefs for the time being than upon the constitution or rather the constitutions under which the States' government is regulated. It follows, therefore, that real reform of the States can only come when the chilling control of the British Imperial system is at least tempered by the freedom of British India secured by the disciplined power of the

people. Not that, therefore, all the journals have to observe silence. Reference to abuses in the States is undoubtedly a necessary part of journalism, and it is a means of creating public opinion. Only, my scope is strictly limited, I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and precept under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of satyagraha which is a direct corollary of non-violence and truth. I am anxious, indeed I am impatient, to demonstrate that there is no remedy for the many ills of life save that of non-violence. It is a solvent strong enough to melt the stoniest heart. To be true to my faith, therefore, I may not write in anger or malice. I may not write idly. I may not write merely to excite passion. The reader can have no idea of the restraint I have to exercise from week to week in the choice of topics and my vocabulary. It is a training for me. It enables me to peep into myself and make discoveries of my weaknesses. Often my vanity dictates a smart expression or my anger a harsh adjective. It is a terrible ordeal but a fine exercise to remove these weeds. The reader sees the pages of *Young India* fairly well dressed up and sometimes with Romain Rolland, he is inclined to say 'what a fine old man this must be'. Well, let the world understand that the fineness is carefully and prayerfully cultivated. And if it has proved acceptable to some whose opinion I cherish, let the reader understand that when that fineness has become perfectly natural, i.e., when I have become incapable of evil and when nothing harsh or haughty occupies, be it momentarily, my thought-world, then and not till then, my non-violence will move all the hearts of all the world. I have placed before me and the reader no impossible ideal or ordeal. It is man's prerogative and birthright. We have lost the paradise only to regain it. If it takes time, then it is but a speck in the complete time-circle. The Divine Teacher of the *Gita* knew when he said that millions of our days are equal to only a day of Brahma. Let us not, therefore, be impatient and in our weakness think that non-violence is a sign of soft brains. It is not.

But I must hasten to the end. The reader knows now why I have been silent about Alwar. I have no data to go upon. Alwar can laugh with as much disdain as the Nizam at anything I may say or write. If all the reports that are published are true, they are proof of Dyerism double distilled. But I know that I have for the moment no remedy. I watch with admiration the effort of the Press to secure at least a decent public inquiry into the awful allegations. I note the silent movement of

Panditji's diplomacy cutting its gentle way. Why need I bother then? Let those who appeal to me for prescriptions know that I am not an infallible *kaviraj* with an inexhaustible pharmacopoeia. I am a humble, groping specialist with hardly two indistinguishable drugs in my little pocket. The specialist pleads present incapacity to deal with the evils complained of.

And to the lovers of the cow, have I not already said that I no longer profess, as I did only a short time ago, to claim any influence over Hindus or Mussalmans? Till I have regained it, *gomata* will forgive her humble child that I claim to be. My life is wound up with hers. She knows I am incapable of betraying her. But she understands my incapacity if her other adorers do not.

Young India, 2-7-1925

203. NOTES

All-India Memorial

I have been asked to inaugurate an all-India Deshbandhu memorial as I have, in consultation with the Bengal friends, inaugurated an all-Bengal memorial. I can assure the reader that the matter has not escaped my attention at all. I have been conferring with the friends who are by me. But we have not yet evolved a formula. For the all-Bengal memorial there was no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion. Deshbandhu's trust-deed was there as the pole-star. But the all-India memorial is not quite so easy a matter. The delay is unavoidable. Probably, by the time this is in print, a conclusion will have been reached. For the present, I must ask everybody to accept my assurance that there will be no unnecessary delay in making the announcement. That there should be an all-India memorial I have not a shadow of a doubt. The universal testimony of grief received from every nook and corner of India is the most eloquent proof of Deshbandhu's universal popularity.

From 'A Revolutionary'

Shrimati Basanti Devi has handed me an anonymous letter received by her from 'a revolutionary', from which I take the following:

> Tears roll down and blur my sight in my attempt to write to you at this moment. I tried to go for a visit to 148, but could not sum up my courage to stand before you. The sight is heart-rending.

> In the death of Deshbandhu Das a great man has fallen—perhaps the greatest the country has produced. There is none to fill up the gap. I am one of those who came to know him not when he gave up his extensive practice at the Bar and its princely income, but long before that when out of his seclusion—as it were—he came out to defend Sreejut Aurobindo Ghose in the Alipur Bomb Case, and from that time came to love him, came to have the highest regard and admiration for and devotion to him. He, too, always had a very soft and warm corner for us in his heart though he has not seen eye to eye with us in politics. For I am one of those who were, in the Partition days, wrongly called Anarchists and who are now very wrongly called the "Revolutionaries". He knew we were much misunderstood and misrepresented and much maligned because of our love of freedom for our common Motherland. To everyone of us he always extended a brother's hand, always trying to guide us in the right path. We sadly miss him today. We are overwhelmed with grief today at his death, for we know there is no man in the country whom we can turn to in our hour of sore need.
>
> Leaders will come and leaders will go; but Deshbandhu Das will never come. He was the hope and inspiration of the people. He was the idol of the nation. His help and guidance were always, as it were, at our disposal and our services, nay our very lives, he knew, were at his command. And here I need only assure you, my dear sister, that our services—nay our lives—are, and shall ever continue to be, at your command.

The portion omitted is a reassurance of sympathy. This letter is an unsolicited testimonial of Deshbandhu's views on revolutionary activities. The reason for his hold on young Bengal is to be sought in his fatherly care of them in spite of their faults. He loved them not because he liked their methods but because he wished to wean them from their ways. Will those who did not listen to him whilst he was alive listen to the voice of his spirit which says to them 'not through violence lies the way to India's freedom'? Will they trust to his riper judgment rather than their own?

An Error?

Here is a letter from the Secretary, District Congress Committee, Pabna:[1]

[1] Not reproduced here. This drew Gandhiji's attention to an error in the article "Khadi Pratishthan", 12-7-1925, in which he wrote of a Satsang Ashram at Pabna as a khaddar manufacturing centre comparable to the Abhoy Ashram at Comilla. According to the correspondent, the Ashram did little work of this kind and actually helped to promote sale of foreign cloth.

I appreciate the letter as it expects from me the utmost accuracy of statement and scrupulous impartiality. I am anxious to live up to the expectation as far as it is humanly possible. But, in spite of all my care, I may do an injustice to some and may be unduly biassed in favour of others; after all both are injustices in the long run. A man or an institution that is undeservedly belauded may even suffer more than the one unjustly decried. But in the case in point I have been most guarded. And whilst almost everything that the secretary says may have been true at one time, it was not true at the time I wrote. I was not adjudging the relative merits of the institutions named nor comparing their account. I merely stated that, at the time of writing, there were so many khaddar-producing institutions which I had visited. I included in these Satsang Ashram, though it was the latest recruit. I saw more than 40 wheels going when I visited the Ashram. Among those spinning were the relatives of the founder, including his wife. I was shown too, khaddar woven at the place. But above all, Deshbandhu, at whose instance I visited the Ashram, had told me that the founder had decided to make spinning and production of khaddar one of its principal activities. The manager who was my guide during my visit confirmed that statement. I would have been unjust if I had not, after all this evidence before me, included the Ashram as one of the khaddar centres. I admit that, at the present moment, there can be no comparison between the Satsang Ashram and the Abhoy Ashram. The latter is as old as, if not older than, the Khadi Pratishthan and was founded chiefly for khaddar and the wheel. Its production is only next to that of Khadi Pratishthan, and [it] has branches in several parts. But my purpose in writing the article in question was not to examine the relative merits, but to bring to the notice of the public the possibilities of Bengal for khaddar propaganda and its premier khaddar organization as a model. I should certainly be pained, if it is true that there is a store conducted in Pabna under the aegis of Satsang Ashram for the sale of foreign cloth.

'A Revolutionary in the Making'

You are too philosophical and too abstruse for me. We must for the time being, therefore, agree to differ and pray for each other till we meet some day in the course of my wanderings. Your decision to add carding to spinning appeals to me most forcibly. I hope that you will make discoveries of the hidden powers of the spinning-wheel and the carding-bow. You can infect your surroundings, too, with your zeal for spinning and, if it becomes

successful, as it can be, when all who are ready-made revolutionaries or who are on the verge of it or are in the making, devote their undoubted talents and energy to the great task, they will find that a bloody revolution is not necessary for our country's salvation. Let these friends of mine help me to make the spinning-wheel hum, let them help me to make the villagers busy and happy and, if even then, we have not succeeded in bringing the Englishmen to book, they will catch me in my weakest moment and may possibly claim me as their convert. And then, like all converts, they may expect me to outstrip them in my red activities.

An Ancient on Untouchability

When I was at Santiniketan, Mr. Andrews handed me the following extracts from a celebrated Tamil poet, Vemana[1], on untouchability:

BOOK II

135. Consider not him a pariah who is so by birth; he who breaks his word is far viler. He who reproaches the pariah is (go to) worse than him(*sic*).

156. Why should you revile a pariah when you see him? This is merely unmannerly language. Of what caste is He who speaks in the pariah?

BOOK III

111. "Thou art defiled and unclean, touch me not!" they cry. What limits are there to defilement? What is its source? All human bodies are equally unclean; defilement is born with ourselves in the body.

162. They that are born Sudras, and yet revile Sudras; who hold themselves twice-born and rely on their title; still, if unable to restrain their hearts, are the lowest of Sudras.

164. If a man still has in his heart the principles of a pariah, and yet scorns pariahs, how should he become twice-born, while devoid of every good quality?

217. If we carefully observe and examine the universe, we shall see that all castes equally originated therein; then all are equal; surely all men are brothers.

223. There is not a viler wretch in the earth than the man who scorns other men, calling them Sudras. After his death he shall fall into hell.

[1] Vemana was a Telugu poet who flourished in the early part of the fifteenth century.

227. Why should we constantly revile the pariah? Are not his flesh and blood the same as ours? And of what caste is He who pervades the pariah (as well as all other men)?

231. Though a man be by birth an outcaste, if he orders his heart aright he is no outcaste; he who can[not] govern his affections is the vilest of the vile.

234. His mother was a prostitute and his wife a pariah, yet Vasishtha was the tutor to the noble Rama: by austerities he became a Brahmin, but if you look to his caste, what is it like?

The extracts show that the Hindu heart was sorely distressed over the inhuman treatment of the so-called untouchables. There is no equivocation about Vemana's emphatic denunciation of the practice of degrading and suppressing our own kith and kin.

Young India, 2-7-1925

204. DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND

Friends have pressed it upon me that, in the interest of the Memorial Fund that is being collected, it is necessary for me not to leave Calcutta at the present moment for the projected tour. Whilst I recognize the usefulness of my presence, after comparing notes with Satcowri Babu, I have come to the conclusion that the tour already advertised ought not to be abandoned. After all, the collections that are pouring in come from thousands of grateful hearts. Personally I have never entertained the slightest doubt about the response of Bengal. We are not an ungrateful nation, and Bengal is not [to] be surpassed by any province in gratefulness. Given the proper cause, Bengal is capable of rising to the highest height. And what cause can be more proper and sacred, more insistent, than a memorial in honour of Deshbandhu? I do not, therefore, regard my presence in Calcutta as essential for ensuring the continuous flow, and shall carry out the tour in the full confidence that the subscriptions will continue with unabated perseverance, until the whole of the sum of ten lakhs is made up. I see that, at the time of writing this note, the total collections amount to over Rs. 2,40,000, of which over Rs. 61,000/-, being today's collection, has to be still delivered to the treasurer. If anything like the present rate of progress continues—and there is no reason why it ought not to—we shall reach ten lakhs by the middle of this month. That we were not able to collect the whole sum by the end of June means no reflec-

tion on Bengal. It was possible, but only just possible, to complete the collection in the eight days that were available. It presupposed a perfect organization or ability and willingness on the part of a few to find the whole sum. I can almost say that, whereever I have gone, I have found the will to pay, but owing to the great depression in trade, the ability to pay large sums has been lacking. And it must be frankly confessed that nowhere in India are we sufficiently organized to reach the names for small collections amongst them in a short time. It is a magnificient tribute to Deshbandhu's memory that, with the very imperfect organization that the Committee have been able to bring into being, small sums are pouring in in such a manner as to keep at least six workers at work, receiving monies from early morning to 10 o'clock at night and even later, not to mention a number of clerks that Sir Rajendra Nath has put on the work of receiving subscriptions and copying the very long lists, containing the names of subscribers, of annas, pice and even half pice. Whilst, therefore, I shall undertake to finish the balance of the Bengal tour without any misgivings, I wish to notify it to the friends who have invited me to different places mentioned in the tour programme, that my principal work in the tour will be to deliver the living message of the late patriot and to collect subscriptions for the memorial. And I hope that they will so arrange the programme in the respective places as to enable maximum amounts to be collected. I trust that they will not spend much money on reception arrangements. I suggest that all decoration will be carefully eschewed and the collections made for reception be saved to the utmost extent possible and be devoted to the Memorial Fund, as is already being done in North Calcutta. I would like here gratefully to mention the fact that telegraphic and postal money orders are pouring in from all parts of Bengal and all other parts of India where Bengalis are domiciled.

I may add that those who are at present receiving monies at 148, Russa Road, will continue to do so in my temporary absence which will begin from part of next Saturday to Wednesday following. I expect to return to Calcutta on Thursday week, the 9th instant, leaving for Serajganj and other places the same day and returning again Sunday morning, the 12th instant.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-7-1925

205. RAINING BANGLES

It was a grand sight—the mass meeting on the Maidan. The arrangements made by the volunteers were perfect. Not a man moved from his seat up to the time of the passing of the resolution in solemn silence, the whole of the great audience standing for full one minute. I have never witnessed in Bengal a meeting so dignified, so solemn and so respectful. I tender my congratulations to those who gathered at the Maidan and the volunteers who carried out the arrangements. I am sorry that I was unable to attend the Town Hall meeting, much as I had intended to. I was detained for over an hour, i.e., up to 7.45 at the ladies' meeting. This meeting was a wonderful sight. In response to the appeal made to them, they rained gold bangles, rings and necklaces. Besides over Rs. 500/-, sixty gold bangles, six chains, sixteen rings, some of them studded, and over twenty ear-rings were given by these devoted daughters of India. I hope that the ladies of Calcutta will continue the work begun at the meeting and those who had no chance of attending the meeting will send in their quota. The simplest method of collecting among the ladies is for those who care to collect only amongst friends. I understand that there has been on previous occasions a great deal of fraudulent collection on the part of unauthorized persons; and as even authority has been found to have been manufactured, the Committee has not shouldered the responsibility of issuing letters of authority to ladies. It is for that reason that I lay emphasis upon those who will, collecting only amongst their friends, so as to avoid all possibility of fraud.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-7-1925

206. ADVICE TO HINDUS[1]

CALCUTTA,
July 2, 1925

At the Hindu quarters, where Mr. Gandhi spoke to the Hindus, Maulana Azad was also present. Mr. Gandhi asked the Hindus to leave their lathis and purify their minds. He said that the Hindus had done wrong by molesting their Mohammedan brethren. His information was that no *kurbani* (slaughter) took place before the eyes of the Hindus. Even if there was a *kurbani* the Hindus had no right to kill men. As it was the injunction of the Hindu Shastra to protect the cow, it was also the injunction to protect men in order to protect the cow. They had no right to kill men. To kill men was a greater crime than killing cows. If Hinduism meant righting a wrong by committing a greater crime then his religion was not Hinduism. Mr. Gandhi said:

I have come not to help you, if you have committed any crime. I would ask the culprit to come forward and say: 'I have killed or wounded men'. Let him confess to the police and go to jail or be hanged.

The Hindu, 3-7-1925

207. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

CALCUTTA,
July 2, 1925

At about 4 p.m. whilst I was attending a meeting of signatories to the Memorial, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta gave the meeting the information that there was a man waiting outside with a report of a serious riot in the coolie lines at Kidderpore dock. We immediately asked the man to come inside and, hearing his report, I suggested to Mr. Sen Gupta that he might telephone and enquire what the matter really was. He, however, preferred to motor himself and find out the situation and on reaching there, the scene of trouble, he sent a telephone message to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Saheb asking him to go there and take me with him. Maulana Saheb came and we immediately motored. This was about 5-30 p.m. On the way, we found a large number of Mussalmans

[1] Riots had broken out in Calcutta on the occasion of *Bakr-Id*. *Vide* also the following item.

in an excited state saying that many Mussalmans had been killed. They had lathis with them. Maulana Saheb pacified them and told them that he and I were going to investigate and that, whatever had happened, they must not think of taking revenge for what they might consider wrong done by Hindus. They listened to Maulana Saheb and consented to disperse. On reaching the gate, we met Mr. Sen Gupta who told us that when he arrived there, there was a free fight going on which was stopped with some difficulty. Police were guarding the approaches and the compound seemed to have been cleared of strangers. We then went to Coolie barracks and on the way met a large crowd of Hindus armed with lathis. Upon enquiring, they said they had gathered there in self-defence as they were afraid of being attacked by Mussalmans. I spoke to them at some length and told them that the information at our disposal went to show that Hindus had mercilessly assaulted Mussalmans who were numerically much weaker than they. And I told them that, if they had done wrong, they should apologize. One of them said that a cow was killed in the lines contrary to custom and that that enraged the coolies. We then went to the spot where the cow was said to have been killed. Upon reaching, we found there was no trace whatsoever of any cow having been killed on the spot that was shown to us. There were parts of a carcass without the skin. Mussalmans present told us that the cow was killed in a mosque and the meat, after the skinning, was brought to their homes in their carriage. There was no blood or any other mark of slaughter. The Commissioner of Police, Mr. Tegart, was present whilst we were making enquiry. So far as I can judge the blame appears to me to be wholly that of Hindus. I told accordingly, and I did not find any serious contradiction. The Hindus even asked for forgiveness of Mussalmans and said that they would not repeat the wrong. Up to that time, according to information in the possession of the Commissioner of Police, no deaths had occurred, though, among many injured Mussalmans, two were in a serious state. Maulana Saheb pacified the Mussalmans and told them that they ought not to give any credence to exaggerated reports and up to that time no one had died. He asked them all to disperse quietly which they consented to do. Assuming the truth of what we heard and saw, there is no doubt that Hindu coolies were entirely in the wrong and that they had hurt innocent Mussalmans and made themselves responsible for at least one death which, as I now understand, has occurred. It is terrible to contemplate that, according to information given to me by the Associated Press

representative, there is not a single Hindu wounded amongst those who were sent to the hospital. I can only hope that wrong-doers will deliver themselves to the authorities.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-7-1925

208. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KHARAGPUR

July 4, 1925

From the Indian Institute Mahatmaji was taken to the Indian Recreation ground where about 20,000 persons had assembled all sitting on the ground. Several European officials of the B. N. Railway were seen present at the meeting and eagerly watching Mahatmaji who addressed the people in Hindi. He referred to the deplorable Hindu-Muslim riot at Kidderpore on the *Bakr-Id* day and said that the blame was entirely on the side of the Hindus. He very eloquently pleaded for Hindu-Muslim unity and expected the Hindus not to interfere with the observance of the religious rites by the Muslims. He also requested the latter not to wound the feelings of their Hindu brethren by anything they did.

At the conclusion he appealed for contribution in cash to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund and a large sum of money was collected on the spot.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-7-1925

209. DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

A friend writes:[1]

It is necessary to correct the language of this letter. I do not remember to have said that we need not be concerned even if a satyagrahi is unjustified in his satyagraha. There is risk of harm in every wrong step. But I have certainly said that, if a satyagrahi is in the wrong, he himself will have to suffer, and he will deserve to suffer. A satyagrahi is not to be held responsible for the suffering which may be caused to the person against whom his satyagraha is directed, for a satyagrahi never wishes to inflict suffering on the other party. If the latter feels hurt or suffers, the satyagrahi need not blame himself. If I start a fast with a pure motive and the fast causes suffering to my co-workers, I must resign myself to that.

[1] The letter is not translated here.

In the case imagined [in the letter], a father is said to be angry. A satyagrahi will never become angry and, if he does become in spite of himself, he will, till his anger has subsided and he has recovered his composure, take no step which may have an effect on the person who is the cause of his anger. Should the satyagrahi, after long and careful deliberation, still think that what his parents have done is wrong, he may certainly try to rectify it, maintaining the utmost respect towards them while doing so; if, in spite of his respectful behaviour, they commit suicide, he need not feel troubled in his conscience. The parents alone would be to blame if in their folly they kill themselves. Why should a son hold himself responsible if his parents invite suffering on themselves by their own actions? If they ask him to do something which is a sin and, on his refusing to obey, they commit suicide, how is he to blame? Prahlad continued to repeat the name of God. This enraged Hiranyakashipu who in the end was destroyed. Prahlad is in no way to be held responsible for this result. Rama honoured his father's word and in the event Dasharatha died; the former is not, on that account, to be held guilty of Dasharatha's death. The subjects were submerged in a sea of grief but Rama hardened his heart and kept his pledge. So did Bhishma despite the intense suffering of Satyavati.[1] The main thing to be borne in mind about this matter is that the urge for satyagraha does not come from anyone. It must be spontaneous. Rama did not consult his elders and gurus before deciding to go and dwell in the forest. In fact, there were enough priests who told him that he would be committing a sin by going to dwell in the forest, and would commit none by refusing to go. But he followed what he thought was his duty, and went to the forest, and thereby won immortal fame. In this unhappy land of ours, people have become impotent to such an extent that on the flimsiest excuse persons threaten to kill themselves or fast unto death. We must not submit to such threats, even when we have reason to believe that they are likely to be carried out. I have often explained in *Navajivan* the difference between a fast which is satyagraha and a fast which is *duragraha*[2].

The same friend gives another instance as follows:[3]

[1] In the *Mahabharata*, to facilitate the marriage of his father, King Santanu, with Satyavati, Bhishma had taken a vow that he would never accept the throne, nor marry.

[2] Firmness in a wrong cause

[3] The extract is not translated here. It said a woman had threatened to commit suicide if the husband did not buy for her foreign cloth worth Rs. 500.

A husband's duty is to provide shelter, food and clothing to his wife appropriate to their circumstances and within his means. A man who has grown poor cannot provide for his wife the luxuries which he could when he was better off. A husband who lives in ignorance may lead, and help his wife to lead, a life of pleasure with dancing and drinking and foreign things to wear. Likewise, on awakening he will reform his life and also want the wife to reform hers. One needs to exercise discretion in this matter. The accepted idea in society is that the wife should follow the husband. But a husband has certainly no right to compel his wife or a father his children in matters like this. Anyone who, having himself adopted khadi, forces his wife and adult sons and daughters to do the same commits a sin. The person is not bound, however, to buy foreign cloth for them to wear. Grown-up sons, if they are not happy with the situation, may separate from the father. The wife's position is difficult. It is not so easy for her to leave the husband. She is generally incapable of supporting herself. I can, therefore, conceive situations in which, if the wife is not ready to follow the husband, it may be the latter's duty to buy foreign cloth for her. Giving up the use of foreign cloth is like changing one's religion. There is, and can be, no rule that every time the husband changes religion the wife too should change hers. The husband should let his wife follow her own religion or way of life, and *vice versa.* In such a case, therefore, the husband will agree to buy foreign cloth for his wife not because he has submitted to her threat, but because he knows it would be wrong to compel her to do anything against her own wishes. Suppose that the wife not only wants foreign cloth for herself, but also wants the husband to wear it and threatens to kill herself if he does not agree. The husband must not submit to such a threat.

The third instance is as follows:[1]

I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that the son should not respect the practice of untouchability even if his conduct causes the utmost suffering to his father. The caution I gave when discussing the first case is relevant here too. This hard-hearted advice is not meant for one who has come to believe that the practice of untouchability is a sin because he has read it so described in my articles. It is meant only for those who are themselves convinced of its being a sin. The point is that so long as

[1] The extract is not translated here. It mentioned a father who had threatened to put an end to his life if his son mixed with *Antyajas*.

one holds an idea as an intellectual belief and no more, one must not disregard the duty, which has reference to the heart, of obeying one's parents. If Prahlad had learnt to repeat Rama's name at someone's suggestion, it would have been his duty to stop repeating it when forbidden by his father.

The fourth, and the last, instance is as follows:[1]

I do not believe that it is the duty of a husband or a wife to gratify his or her partner's desire. It is a kind of coercion for either partner to compel the other to share in his or her weakness. A husband and a wife have no right to use coercion in their relations with each other. Desire is like fire. It consumes human beings as fire consumes hay. Light one blade in a stack of hay and the whole will be on fire. We need not take the trouble of lighting all the blades one by one. When one partner is overcome with desire, the other is bound to be affected. I bow in all reverence to the husband or the wife who is not so affected.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-7-1925

210. LEARNING AND ENJOYING

Pupils are taught astronomy in schools which teach English, —or they were in my time. It was not to be expected that the subject should figure in schools which taught only Gujarati. In teaching it, however, it never occurred to the teacher to point to the stars in the sky. Even if a teacher thought of doing so, what could he teach? If asked by someone to point out the planet Mars, I certainly doubt whether he could have done so. As, however, the study of astronomy means learning to recognize the planets and the stars moving in the heavens, the subject should be taught by directly pointing these out.

But nothing of the sort was done in those days. I knew, of course, that astronomy could be a very interesting study if the subject was taught through direct observation of the heavens, but this became especially clear to me while I was spending my days in the holy Yeravda Jail.[2] We were permitted there to sleep in the open and, therefore, my desire to converse with the stars

[1] The extract is not translated here. It described the difficulty of a husband who had taken the vow of *brahmacharya*, but had to consider his wife's desire for a son, the couple having lost all the four sons born to them.

[2] From March 1922 to February 1924

became very strong. But, not knowing their language, what was I to talk with them about? I wished to learn their language with the help of books, but could not do so. For I had busied myself with work there, and knowing that I had to spend six years in jail, I had thought that I would learn to converse with these denizens of the sky after completing the study of the Upanishads which I had undertaken.

But I was destined to be a witness to the death of Chittaranjan[1] and so did not remain in Yeravda as long as I would have been happy to. The God who rules our fate sent me out, providing a reason in my illness, and so I remained without the knowledge of the solar system. I envy Shri Shankerlal, for, a book in hand, he had started every night making the acquaintance of the stars. I have before me an illustration, in a handwritten newspaper, of how one may enjoy learning this subject; I quote from it here:[2]

If the reader would taste the joy described in this passage, let him look at the sky on a cloudless night. If he is altogether ignorant about the planets, he would be in the same plight as I am. Let him come out of it without delay. He should get hold of a book which will teach him astronomy interestingly, and go through it. If necessary, he may write to the Gujarat Vidyapith to inquire from where he may order it. If he does not get the required information from that source, or is told that no such book is available, he may stop contributing money to the Vidyapith if he has been doing so. If, on the other hand, he succeeds in finding the book, he should contribute something now even in case he has hitherto contributed nothing.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-7-1925

211. *MY NOTES*

Deshbandhu's Last Journey

The scriptures say that, as a man abandons an old house and goes to live in a new one, so the *atman* dwelling in a body abandons it when it grows old, builds another and lives in that. As one does not feel happy when leaving one's old house, because of long association with it, likewise the soul is not happy when leav-

[1] C. R. Das
[2] The passage is not translated here.

ing the body because of the association, even if the legs are swollen and look like pillars the body is emaciated into a mere skeleton and the man struggles for breath. But one forgets the old house when the new one is ready and the soul, too, when it has a new home to dwell in, retains no memory at all of the old—such is the mystery of death and birth. If this is so, what cause do we have for fear or grief? It is more correct to think of death as the last journey than as mere extinction.

If we wish Deshbandhu's soul to have peace in its last journey, there is only one thing we can do, and that is to develop in ourselves as many of his virtues as we can. Some of them we certainly can. All of us cannot command English like his or be lawyers of his calibre or do the work he did in legislatures, but we can all have his patriotism and cultivate generosity like his. We may not be able to give as much money as he did, but anyone who gives to the best of his means will have given enough. A copper coin given by a widow counts far more than the thousands a Maharaja may give from the crores in his possession. After he had started wearing khadi, Deshbandhu never used any other cloth for his dress either at home or in public. Shall we not start wearing khadi? Deshbandhu never demanded fine khadi. He preferred coarse khadi. He tried to learn spinning. Will those who have not started spinning do so?

ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL

At present, money is being collected for a memorial to him in Bengal. But will it be right not to have an all-India memorial? Since all of us are busy here with the collection for Bengal, I have not been able to consult friends. But I have been thinking about the matter in my own mind. As for the kind of memorial it should be, I have Deshbandhu's trust-deed with me. This is not written down, as the written will for the memorial in Bengal, but it is as good as a written testament. I shall say no more about it in this issue; my appeal will have come out before the next issue.

The reader should get ready to loosen his purse strings. Since people will be asked to contribute only as much as their means permit, no one need get nervous. Deshbandhu gave money not out of fear but of his own free will; he enjoyed giving. If he threw up a practice worth millions, it was with no painful effort of will; he did so because he found it unbearable to continue it. Let no one, therefore, feel nervous at my suggestion. With the progressive awakening in the country, every time there is a cala-

mity, people will have to part with some share of their earnings; they should be ready to do so willingly. That is not love which merely sheds tears and does no more. Profession without action, is no love; it is but empty words. Love gives, and acts, without talking. One who loves his father does not go about, like a bard, praising the father's virtues; he preserves his legacy, improves upon it and adds to it. A father's best property consists in his virtues, which the son cultivates in himself and so brings credit both to the father and to himself. In the same way, we who are Deshbandhu's heirs must contribute what we can to enhance what he has left behind.

Gujaratis in Calcutta

There is a special bond of regard between the Gujaratis and me. I have a way of saying harsh things, and the country has put up with it. It is to the Gujaratis, however, that I say the harshest things. They do not misunderstand me, but take my words in the right spirit, regard them as the salutary doses of a *vaid*[1] and love me all the more for them. I had this experience with the Gujaratis in Calcutta last week. They had called a meeting to express condolence on the death of Deshbandhu.[2] I was invited to attend and preside over it. The organizers had also promised me that they would make a collection. I saw that there had been no collection. I was, therefore, forced to say a few harsh things. We do well in holding a condolence meeting; but there should be only one, not too many. There had been one on the day on which Deshbandhu died, and again on July 1 there will be meetings in the whole country. There can be, therefore, only one reason for holding a meeting in between, confined to a particular community and that reason must be to start some constructive activity, namely to collect contributions for the fund. Some activity of this kind is the best thing which Gujaratis, Marwaris and other outsiders living in Bengal can take up. This is what I said in my speech. It did not make the Gujaratis angry; on the contrary, they understood my point and there was a shower of rupees from the galleries in the theatre in which the meeting was held, and a sum of more than Rs. 6,000 was collected on the spot. If anyone offered less than he should, there was no dearth of persons to rebuke him. I have been told that there are still many persons who have not given as much as they can. If it is so, I should like such persons to make good the deficiency.

[1] Physician practising Ayurvedic system of medicine

[2] The meeting was held at Alfred Theatre on June 26, 1925.

In this Note, however, my aim is to thank my Gujarati brothers in Calcutta.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-7-1925

212. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*July 6, 1925*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I do understand your grief at our separation. Will that not become permanent one day? So bear this much which is inevitable.

I had Motilalji's wire. Meet Basanti Devi. Consult her and then send a wire directly from there. Let her stay with us if she can be well looked after at 148 [Russa Road]. However, this depends entirely upon Basanti Devi.

I have also received your letter here. The thing must have been given to the *Forward*. It is bound to appear some day. Send a copy to Shyambabu.

Rs. 500/- have been collected at Khadagpur and Rs. 500/- at Contai. Some more have been promised. Let us see how much we get here at Midnapur. Rajendra Babu parted from us here. He has gone to Purulia.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Meet Basanti Devi every day. I wrote two more columns for *Young India* in the train.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 11432

213. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Ashad Vad 1 [July 7, 1925][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I must write something to you. I have your mail. I have not received any addressed to Khadi Pratishthan. I shall write about the collection after going there. I hope the summaries of my speeches appear in the papers. That article was all right. Here in Midnapur I gave the Rani a lesson in spinning. She has taken a vow too. I shall certainly examine the Chinaman. If we can keep him, I would certainly do so. You may keep him under your shelter. It would be better if he learnt Hindi. Yesterday I went to sleep four times. The desire for sleep is not yet satisfied. Many a one has taught me to eat off silver utensils. Here I had a lesson in eating off gold utensils. Just imagine a gold bowl upon our wooden plate! How to accept such worshipful hospitality? I was stunned. Said not a word to the Rani. Could God be tempting me? But how long? What faith this country has! May God save me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11430

214. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, MIDNAPUR[1]

July 7, 1925

He said that he was pleased that the function at Midnapore began with a welcome from the students. His present tour, he said, was meant for the realization of the teachings of Deshbandhu Das and for the raising of a subscription for his memorial. He said that Deshbandhu sacrificed his property and life for the welfare of the young men and that he hoped and depended much on them, specially the students. Mahatma said that the life of that illustrious patriot might be divided into two parts—external and internal. The external only tended to help the internal. Deshbandhu wanted to increase the strength of the nation and free the country. So far as the external was concerned, it was only for the rich and the educated to follow, but as to the internal, it might be cultivated alike by the rich and the poor, by the educated and the illiterate, by the boy and the girl, by the young and the old. For the last 6 or 9 months of his life, Deshbandhu tried to hold before the public the ideal of village reorganization or village reconstruction in which males and females of every age and grade in society might take part.

Mahatmaji directed the attention of the students to this and said that the foremost and easiest way of beginning work in the village is the introduction of charkha in every household. He had long discussions with Deshbandhu over this at Darjeeling and both of them agreed as above, and the latter communicated the same to Babu Satcouripati Roy only a few days before he expired. It is a pity, said the Mahatma, that Deshbandhu was not among them to complete the programme he had chalked out for his countrymen. He said that, if they had any love or admiration for their Deshbandhu, they would take a vow to spin for at least half an hour every day, never use any foreign cloth and take up the work of village reconstruction in right earnest. In conclusion, he appealed to the students to take the permission of their parents and contribute whatever they could to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. He asked them to give any gold buttons or articles of luxury they had with them or curtail their daily expenditure, even by fasting, for one, two or three days, if necessary, and contribute the savings to the fund. This sort of sacrifice, he said, was not new to the students, and that, during the last 30 or 40 years of his political activity, he received such help from them on many occasions, notably during the last Malabar flood relief. He, however, warned them that, if this sacrifice on their part was not done with pleasure, he would

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address by the students, to which he replied in Hindi.

not accept a farthing from them. He asked them to choose one of them or one of their elders as their leader and collect subscriptions through him and take a vow to spin regularly and never to use foreign cloth.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-7-1925

215. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANKURA[2]

July 8, 1925

Mahatmaji said that, after his arrival in the district, he had heard of the many activities of Anil Babu and the hold he had on the affection of the people. Mahatmaji exhorted the people to carry on the work of Anil Babu and hoped that Anil Babu would soon be back from jail. Then he said that he was carrying the message of Deshbandhu and the lessons the departed hero taught us—the lesson of sacrifice, of intense activity, of extreme devotion to the motherland and of love of the poor.

He asked the people to accelerate the work of the Swaraj Party, not by paying a mere subscription or enlisting the name, but by reconstruction of the village. It was not possible for everyone to enter the Councils, but it was possible for everyone to help in the work of reconstruction. Mahatmaji said that, at Darjeeling, he and Deshbandhu were in complete conformity so far as charkha and village reconstruction were concerned. How was it possible to attain swaraj unless the village life was revived? The charkha was the emblem of the unity of the village and the town. The root of all famines, diseases and other calamities was India's poverty. That was the lesson he was taught from the early days of the Congress from the pages of the Dada of Hindusthan, Dadabhai Naoroji.[3] And how could we get rid of that poverty? By taking to the charkha. He asked the people to reflect upon the immense possibilities of the charkha. He then concluded by appealing for collections for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Coins and ornaments now began to pour in and the meeting dispersed.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-7-1925

[1] Later in the day Gandhiji addressed a women's meeting and in the evening, a largely-attended public gathering, where he was presented addresses by several institutions and spoke emphasizing the need for rural reconstruction, spinning, Hindu-Muslim unity, etc.

[2] Gandhiji was presented with addresses by the public, the District Board, the Municipality and Bankura Sammilani. He replied to them in Hindi.

[3] Reference to *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*

216. NOTES

Two Difficulties

A distinguished countryman has sent me through a common friend the following questions for answer in *Young India*:

> 1. You admit that untouchability is a blot not only upon Hinduism but upon humanity. Why then do you restrict the circle of reformers to Hindus only? Why may not Mussalmans take up the reform the same as Hindus?
>
> 2. You insist continuously upon Hindu-Muslim unity, will you please point out anything concrete you have done for Islam or Mussalmans?

As to the first question, although the evil of untouchability is not merely a blot upon Hinduism, but is also a blot upon humanity, it is a question which Hindus must solve for themselves, even as they are solving several other questions regarding Hinduism. There is the question of *devadasis*, for instance. Their existence is not a small evil. The institution is a blot upon humanity. But no non-Hindu thinks of meddling with it in the same sense in which Hindus are. The reason is obvious. Removal of these abuses has to come from within, not imposed upon Hindus. This can only be brought about by Hindus. Mussalmans, Christians and other non-Hindus are at perfect liberty to criticize untouchability as any other evil in Hinduism. They can lend the reform their moral support. But they may not go further without exposing themselves to the charge of having designs upon Hinduism.

As to the second charge, I must content myself with having noted it. I cannot answer it without committing a breach of propriety. If I have to prove to Mussalmans my concrete contribution to unity, it follows that there is none. And I must, therefore, submit to the condemnation that the question carries with it, till such time that my *bona fides* are self-proved. But, in fairness to the Mussalmans in general, I must say that it is for the first time that I have been called upon to produce a certificate of service. Let me say, however, that they also serve who wait and pray. And if there are many Mussalmans like the distinguished inquirer who want to inspect my record of service, I ask them not to bother their heads about it, but to be content with the assurance that I am at least watching, waiting and praying, if I am not actively serving.

"Vaidyas" Complaint

The *vaidyas* have been deeply hurt by my criticism of Ayurveda and Unani physicians. They accuse me of softness of brain and denial of ahimsa. I am sorry to have caused so much hurt to them. But I cannot plead guilty. I have not criticized Ayurveda. I have criticized those who have professed to follow it. I have not criticized all of them, but I have criticized the large number who make the pretensions I have accused them of. There is no contradiction between my endorsement of a proposition to promote research in the indigenous drugs and plants and my condemnation of the method adopted by some of these physicians, even as there is none between my laying the foundation of the Ayurvedic College in Calcutta and my warning to the *kavirajas*. It is open to the *vaidyas* of Poona to reject the criticism offered in a friendly spirit. I shall be sorry for the decision, but the rejection will not alter my opinion which is based on experience. I have chapter and verse for every statement I have made. I do like everything that is ancient and noble, but I utterly dislike a parody of it. And I must respectfully refuse to believe that ancient books are the last word on the matters treated in them. As a wise heir to the ancients, I am desirous of adding to and enriching the legacy inherited by us. Let me inform the protestants that some *kavirajas* have welcomed my criticism, which has set them thinking. Needless to say that it was not directed against those who are carrying on scientific research in a spirit of humility and without counting the cost. Only, they are too few to be counted. I plead for an appreciable increase.

Spinning Resolution

The reader will recall the spinning resolution of the A.I.C.C. at Ahmedabad. The following figures have been supplied to me by the A.I.K.B. of the use made of the yarn received in terms of the resolution:[1]

This brief report has its own moral. The output is nothing compared to what it should be or can be. But the effort shows how the slightest inattention to detail hampers progress in every direction. An organization is like machinery; just as, if the smallest screw becomes loose, the whole machinery becomes loose and may even break down, so in an organization the least looseness affects its smooth working and the results expected. The brief

[1] The report, which spoke of the inferiority of much of the yarn spun, is not reproduced here.

experiment of three months has a lesson for those who are dealing with the spinning franchise.

The price of this khaddar has not been reduced for the simple reason that the quantity is too small to warrant reduction. And it was a difficult thing to determine who should receive the benefit of the cheapness. Spinners beware! On you, as you can see from the report, depends the question of exclusion of foreign cloth and the production of khaddar enough to clothe the whole country.

Spinning a New Habit

An esteemed American friend who has been practising spinning writes:

> May I take the liberty of making a suggestion, growing out of my temporary failure some time ago to keep up my spinning regularly? (I have reformed now.) It is this: that in asking people to spin or in talking with them after they have promised to spin, might it not be worth while to get them to realize that they are about to establish a *new habit*; that new habits must be very assiduously tended until they get firmly established; that one failure in regularity, one omission will undo the work and strivings of many days in the early stages of formation of the habit; that new channels of nervous and muscular action and control have to be worn by *constant, regular* practice; that probably the habit is not safely established until one can spin and at the same time talk with people and discuss matters entirely different, while keeping the hands going. Then the control and response have become automatic. People ought to realize that mere emotional enthusiasm does not always carry through the labour of firmly establishing the habit; that they should reinforce their emotions by their minds, by clearly thinking out the values, meaning, applications of charkha and khaddar to themselves, their family, their village and nation, —politically, economically, morally and spiritually. Those who can afford to ought to buy your "Wheel of Fortune" and read all the discussions of the subject they can.
>
> Personally I feel that people, especially intellectuals unused to hand-work and simple realities, need to reinforce their enthusiasm by their minds. I feel that one of the reasons for much of the back-sliding since 1920 may have been due to this lack of realization by new converts of how they should go about the establishment of such a new habit, what are the dangers to guard against, how they can provide in advance to keep themselves in a favourable frame of mind or free from distractions or interruptions at the chosen spinning hour each day, how they can provide favourable surroundings and atmosphere, how to get a due sense of what is really important, etc.

> Maybe, you always do give them such advice, or maybe I am reasoning wrongly out of experience of American character and in ignorance of the Indian nature. Those were some of the things which caused my failure for several weeks, so I pass them along to you for whatever worth they may have.

The friend need not have apologized for relating his experiences, for human nature at bottom is the same even as the American sky as a matter of fact is the same as the Indian. Only the presentation is different from what the readers of *Young India* are accustomed to. The voluntary spinners who have become accustomed to spinning have had the same difficulties that have faced the American friend. What is wanted is resolution at the back of one's mind. It anticipates and overcomes all difficulties. The value of the friend's analysis of his difficulties lies in the fact that he has made plain to us what most of us have felt without perceiving.

Young India, 9-7-1925

217. PAINFULLY ILLUMINATING

This letter[1] was handed to me at Chittagong and has been in my jacket, awaiting attention at the first opportunity. The reader is aware how the attempt to wean the fallen sisters from their error has apparently resulted in giving a passport to vice. Prostitution I knew was a tremendous and a growing evil. The tendency to see virtue in vice and excuse evil in the sacred name of art or some other false sentiment has clothed this debasing indulgence with a kind of subtle respectability which is responsible for the moral leprosy which he who runs may see. But I was unprepared for the terrible state the correspondent declares to exist. I fear that he has not exaggerated the evil. For, during my tour, I have had corroboration from various sources. Great as the evil is in this age of unbelief or a mere mechanical belief in God and an age of multiplicity of comforts and luxuries, almost reminding one of the degradation to which Rome had descended when she was apparently at the zenith of her power, it is not easy to prescribe a remedy. It cannot be remedied by law. London is seething with the vice. Paris is notorious for its vice which has almost become a fashion. If law would have prevented it, these highly organized nations would have cured their capitals of the

[1] Not reproduced here. It spoke of the evils of brothels, cinema-houses, drinking and smoking.

vice. No amount of writing on the part of reformers like myself can deal with the evil in any appreciable form. The political domination of England is bad enough. The cultural is infinitely worse. For, whilst we resent and, therefore, endeavour to resist the political domination, we hug the cultural, not realizing in our infatuation that, when the cultural domination is complete, the political will defy resistance. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not wish to imply that, before the British rule, prostitution was unknown in India. But I do say that it was not so rampant as now. It was confined to the few upper ten. Now it is fast undoing the youth of the middle classes. My hope lies in the youth of the country. Such of them as are prey to the vice are not vicious by nature. They are helplessly and thoughtlessly drawn to it. They must realize the harm that it has done them and society. They must understand, too, that nothing but a rigorously disciplined life will save them and the country from utter ruin. Above all, unless they visualize God and seek His aid in keeping them from temptation, no amount of dry discipline will do them much good. Truly has the Seer said in the *Gita* that "desire persists though man may by fasting keep his body under restraint. Desire goes only when one has seen God face to face." Seeing God face to face is to feel that He is enthroned in our hearts even as a child feels a mother's affection without needing any demonstration. Does a child reason out the existence of a mother's love? Can he prove it to others? He triumphantly declares: "It is." So must it be with the existence of God. He defies reason. But He is experienced. Let us not reject the experience of Tulsidas, Chaitanya, Ramdas and a host of other spiritual teachers even as we do not reject that of mundane teachers.

The correspondent has inquired whether Congressmen may do the many things he has enumerated, such as theatre-going, etc. I have already remarked that man cannot be made good by law. If I had the power of persuasion, I would certainly stop women of illfame from acting as actresses, I would prevent people from drinking and smoking, I would certainly prevent all the degrading advertisements that disfigure even reputable journals and newspapers and I would most decidedly stop the obscene literature and portraits that soil the pages of some of our magazines. But, alas, I have not the persuasive power I would gladly possess. But to regulate these things by law, whether of the State or the Congress, would be a remedy probably worse than the disease. What is wanted is an intelligent, sane, healthy and pure public opinion. There is no law against using kitchens as closets or drawing rooms

as stables. But public opinion, that is, public taste will not tolerate such a combination. The evolution of public opinion is at times a tardy process but it is the only effective one.

Young India, 9-7-1925

218. 'THE SCIENCE OF SURRENDER'

Exception has been taken to my remarks at a meeting in Calcutta that Deshbandhu, in his relations with the Mussalmans, brought "the science of surrender to perfection". The exception has been taken because my critics impute to me the implication that by surrender I mean that Deshbandhu conferred on Mussalmans favours, that is, things they were not entitled to. The critics opine that the Hindus are acting towards the Mussalmans much the same as Englishmen are acting towards us all—having first taken away everything and then offering us doles in the name of favours.

I know what I said at the meeting in question. I have not read the reports of my speech, but I desire to abide by all I said at that meeting. I make bold to say that without mutual surrender there is no hope for this distraught country. Let us not be hyper-sensitive or devoid of imagination. To surrender is not to confer favour. Justice that love gives is a surrender, justice that law gives is a punishment. What a lover gives transcends justice. And yet it is always less than he wishes to give, because he is anxious to give more and frets that he has nothing left. It is libellous to say that Hindus act like Englishmen. Hindus cannot even if they would, and this I say in spite of the brutality of the labourers of Kidderpore. Both Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. Both are fallen. And they are in the position of lovers, have to be, whether they will or no. Every act, therefore, of a Hindu towards the Mussalman and *vice versa* must be an act of surrender and not mere justice. They may not weigh their acts in golden scales and exact consideration. Each has to regard himself ever a debtor of the other. By justice, why should not a Mussalman kill a cow every day in front of me? But his love for me restrains him from so doing and he goes out of his way sometimes even to refrain from eating beef for his love of me, and yet thinks that he has done only just what is right. Justice permits me to shout my music in the ear of Maulana Mahomed Ali when he is at prayer, but I go out of my way to anticipate his feelings and make my talks whispers whilst he is praying and still consider that I have conferred no favour on the Maulana. On the other hand,

I should become a loathsome creature if I exercised my just right of playing tomtom precisely at the time of his prayer. Justice might have been satisfied if Deshbandhu Das had not filled certain posts with Mussalmans, but he went out of his way to anticipate Mussalman wishes and placate Mussalman sentiment. It was his sensitiveness to placate them that hastened his death. For I know what a shock it was to him to learn that law, i.e., justice, would compel him to disinter certain remains buried in unauthorized ground and he was trying to find out means of avoiding any the slightest offence to Muslim sentiment, even though it may be unreasonable. This was all going out of the way—not his way, but the way of the world. And yet he never considered that he was conferring any favour on the Mussalmans by delicately considering their feelings. Love never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself.

This talk, therefore, of justice and nothing but justice is a thoughtless, angry and ignorant outburst whether it comes from Hindus or Mussalmans. So long as Hindus and Mussalmans continue to prate about justice, they will never come together. 'Might is right' is the last word of 'justice and nothing but justice'. Why should Englishmen surrender an inch of what they have earned by right of conquest? Or why should Indians, when they come to power, not make the English disgorge everything which their ancestors robbed them of? And yet when we come to a settlement, as we shall some day, we will not weigh in the scales of justice so called. But we shall introduce into the calculation the disturbing factor of surrender, otherwise called love or affection or fellow-feeling. And so will it be with us Hindus and Mussalmans when we have sufficiently broken one another's heads and spilled a few gallons of innocent blood and realized our foolishness. The scales will then fall off our eyes and we shall recognize that vengeance was not the law of friendship; not justice but surrender and nothing but surrender was the law of friendship. Hindus will have to learn to bear the sight of cow-slaughter and the Mussalmans will have to discover that it was against the law of Islam to kill a cow in order to wound the susceptibilities of Hindus. When that happy day arrives, we shall know only each other's virtues. Our vices will not obtrude themselves upon our gaze. That day may be far off or it may be very near. I feel it coming soon. I shall work for that end and no other.

It is scarcely necessary for me to add by way of caution that my surrender does not mean surrender of principle. I made the point clear at the meeting and I wish to emphasize it here once

more. But what we are just now fighting for is not any principle at all, but vanity and prejudice. We strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

Young India, 9-7-1925

219. A SILENT SERVANT

I would ask the reader to share my grief over the death of an esteemed friend and silent public servant—I mean Principal Sushil Rudra, who died on Tuesday, 30th June. India, whose chief disease is her political servitude, recognizes only those who are fighting publicly to remove it by giving battle to a bureaucracy that has protected itself with a treble line of entrenchment—army and navy, money and diplomacy. She naturally does not know her selfless and self-effacing workers in other walks of life, no less useful than the purely political. Such a humble worker was Sushil Rudra, late principal of St. Stephen's College. He was a first-class educationist. As principal, he had made himself universally popular. There was a kind of spiritual bond between him and his pupils. Though he was a Christian, he had room in his bosom for Hinduism and Islam which he regarded with great veneration. His was not an exclusive Christianity that condemned to perdition everyone who did not believe in Jesus Christ as the only saviour of the world. Jealous of the reputation of his own, he was tolerant towards the other faiths. He was a keen and careful student of politics. Of his sympathies with the so-called extremists, if he made no parade, he never made any secret either. Ever since my return home in 1915, I had been his guest whenever I had occasion to go to Delhi. It was plain sailing enough so long as I had not declared satyagraha in respect of the Rowlatt Act. He had many English friends in the higher circles. He belonged to a purely English Mission. He was the first Indian principal chosen in his college. I, therefore, felt that his intimate association with me and his giving me shelter under his roof might compromise him and expose his college to unnecessary risk. I, therefore, offered to seek shelter elsewhere. His reply was characteristic: "My religion is deeper than people may imagine. Some of my opinions are vital parts of my being. They are formed after deep and prolonged prayers. They are known to my English friends. I cannot possibly be misunderstood by keeping you under my roof as an honoured friend and guest. And if ever I have to make a choice between losing what influence I may have among

Englishmen and losing you, I know what I would choose. You cannot leave me." "But what about all kinds of friends who come to see me? Surely, you must not let your house become a caravanserai when I am in Delhi," I said. "To tell you the truth," he replied, "I like it all. I like the friends who come to see you. It gives me pleasure to think that, in keeping you with me, I am doing some little service to my country." The reader may not be aware that my open letter[1] to the Viceroy, giving concrete shape to the Khilafat claim, was conceived and drafted under Principal Rudra's roof. He and Charlie Andrews were my revisionists. Non-co-operation was conceived and hatched under his hospitable roof. He was a silent but deeply interested spectator at the private conference that took place between the Maulanas, other Mussalman friends and myself. Religious motive was the foundation for all his acts. There was, therefore, no fear of temporal power, though the same motive also enabled him to value the existence and the use and the friendship of temporal power. He exemplified in his life the truth that religious perception gives one a correct sense of proportion resulting in a beautiful harmony between action and belief. Principal Rudra drew to himself as fine characters as one could possibly wish for. Not many people know that we owe C. F. Andrews to Principal Rudra. They were twins. Their relationship was a study in ideal friendship. Principal Rudra leaves behind him two sons and a daughter, all grown up and settled in life. They know their grief is shared by the numerous friends and admirers of their noble-hearted father.

Young India, 9-7-1925

220. *CHANCE OF PEACE*[2]

I do not read the Faridpur message as Mr. Chatterji does. Deshbandhu made his position clear to the extent that he was prepared to wait for full responsible government till 1929, provided an honourable compromise was offered by the Government making it possible for the people's representatives to work the Reforms. What those terms should be was a matter of friendly discussion at a round-table conference. It was impossible for Deshbandhu to accept, in advance and without accurately knowing them, the minority recommendations of the Muddiman Committee. My

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVII, pp. 502-4.

[2] This was Gandhiji's rejoinder to B. C. Chatterji's letter dated July 3; *vide* Appendix II.

own position is incredibly simple. I am interested in the Reforms through my accredited agents, the Swarajists. They have specialized in the matter and I shall endorse whatever they recommend. I have nothing to offer the British Government save my weakness at the present moment. In my weakness, I can only wait for England to make a sincere gesture. When she does, I shall close unconditionally. Even in my weakness, I feel strong enough to know what is and is not life-giving and to reject what is not life-giving. I cannot deceive myself. I expect nothing substantial till my poor country is strong. I must, therefore, gather strength. And since I eschew violence from my selection of means, I have to fall back upon the spinning-wheel and such like or the more comprehensive term given by Deshbandhu—village reconstruction, and if and when necessary, civil disobedience.

As to union of parties, I fear the differences between the Liberals and the Swarajists are in some respects fundamental. A mere acceptance of Reforms under improved conditions does not necessarily destroy the difference. If I may state the difference as it appears to me, in one sentence, it is this: the Swarajists expect to be able to retaliate within a measurable distance of time if the Government do not accept the reasonable demands of the people, the Liberals expect to secure what is possible merely by reasoning with the Government. Liberals will, therefore, march with the Swarajists only up to a certain point. But I may be, I hope I am, mistaken. Like Barkis, I am ever willing.

Young India, 9-7-1925

221. NOT TWO RACES

The following will be read with interest:

I have many times noted that you have referred to the Hindus and the Muslims as two 'races' in India. In my humble opinion, it is only less mischievous to speak of these two religious communities as 'races' than it is to call them two 'nations' as a Mussalman correspondent of yours once did. (See *Young India*, 24-7-'24, p. 244).[1] The fact is that about 90 per cent of the Mussalman Indians (I would call them so, and not Indian Mussalmans, as they are wont to call themselves) are of the same 'race' or races as the Hindus,—having been descended from Indian ancestors who embraced Islam in India itself. As for the remaining 10 per cent of the Mussalman Indians, though they may have some drops

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXIV, p. 425.

of Turkish, Tatar, Arab, Pathan, Persian or Abyssinian blood in their veins, yet it is so much intermixed with native Indian blood by intermarriage down through the generations, that those 10 per cent may safely be designated as 99 per cent native by race. In fact, the Hindus and Mussalmans in India no more represent two races than do the Protestants and Catholics in England. It is a question upon which history, ethnology and anthropometry can fairly accurately pronounce. But above all, whatever the racial constitution of their blood, the fact cannot be denied that *all* of them (cent per cent) were born in India, are living in India, will die in India and be buried in India, like their fathers before them. And India is one country, and therefore they are all of one nation with Hindus. If only they were to regard themselves in Indian politics as Mussalman Indians, and not Indian Mussalmans!

All the above applies *mutatis mutandis* also to Christian Indians, the third important religious community in India. (Perhaps no religious community in India or outside is of one race. Certainly not the Hindus. Then why speak of any community as a race?) Let our Christians, too, in their country's politics treat themselves as Christian Indians, even as their fellows in faith are doing in Egypt, Palestine, China, Japan and the Philippines.

The correspondent's position is historically accurate. It is difficult to get out of the habit of using words which have passed current with a definite meaning. Even "two communities" is open to the same objection. I can only promise to be careful in future. The watchful correspondent must not relax his effort to make the language of *Young India* accord with facts.

Young India, 9-7-1925

222. SPEECH AT SWARAJIST COUNCILLORS' MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

July 9, 1925

The Mahatma said that they should not indulge in the petty question whether Mr. Sen Gupta was a resident of Calcutta or not. The great point

[1] The meeting was held to elect a Mayor for the Municipal Corporation from among the two contestants—Sarat Chandra Bose, Swarajist Alderman, and J. M. Sen Gupta. Gandhiji and Abul Kalam Azad were deputed by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee to persuade the Councillors to elect the latter. The point was raised in objection to Sen Gupta's candidature that he was not a resident of Calcutta, as he came from Chittagong. After an hour-long speech by Gandhiji, the full report of which is not available, Sen Gupta was elected by 31 votes to 6.

was that he was the leader of the Swaraj Party and the President of the Bengal Congress Committee. The Mayoralty should be associated with the man whom they had appointed leader the other day. They ought not to indulge in acrimonious discussions and, given fair trial, Mr. Sen Gupta would prove an asset to the Corporation. His hands should not be tied and it was up to the people to follow him in all matters, whether political or municipal. By associating himself in almost all the activities of the Deshbandhu, Mr. Sen Gupta had possessed a heritage from which he would never falter. He assured that Mr. Sen Gupta's administration would be happy and prosperous, with the co-operation and good will of his colleagues.[1]

The Hindu, 10-7-1925

223. *AT DARJEELING*

[*July 10, 1925*]

I have almost promised the reader the sacred recollections of the five days I had with Deshbandhu at Darjeeling. I have called them among the most precious in my life. As time passes, the preciousness increases. I must tell the reader why. Though I had lived under Deshbandhu's roof before, ours was then a purely political meeting. We were both engrossed in our own allotted tasks. But in Darjeeling it was different. I had Deshbandhu wholly to myself. He was resting and I had gone solely to have communion with him. My going to Darjeeling for rest was a mere excuse. But for Deshbandhu's presence there I would not have gone in spite of the attraction of the snowy range. But in one of his pencil notes, which he had lately taken to writing to me, he said, "Remember, you are under my jurisdiction. I am Chairman of the Reception Committee. You have to include Darjeeling in your tour. This is a command." I wish I had kept those sweet notes of his, but, alas! they have gone the way hundreds of such documents in my possession have gone. I pleaded that I had the Working Committee to take. "Then bring the whole Committee. I shall arrange for their accommodation. The B.P.C.C. shall pay the fares of the members. I am wiring to Satcouri accordingly," was his telegraphic reply. I was unable to take the Working Committee to Darjeeling, but I promised to go as soon after that meeting as possible. And so I went. I had gone there for only two days. He kept me with him for five. He got Basanti Devi to ask

[1] For Gandhiji's explanation as to his motives in espousing Sen Gupta's mayoralty, *vide* "Calcutta's Mayor", 16-7-1925.

Sjt. Phooken to postpone the Assam tour and himself postponed the Bengal tour by three days. I am mentioning these details to show the eagerness we had to be with each other. As it has turned out, Deshbandhu's approaching long sleep was preparing us for a close communion.

He was on a convalescent if not on a sick-bed. He had need to be taken care of. But he insisted on attending to every detail regarding my comfort and that of my companions. His appointments must be on a lavish scale. He had ordered five goats to be brought from the plains. He would not have me miss my milk for a single meal. I had often come under Basanti Devi's sisterly care, but at Darjeeling I was the object of Deshbandhu's personal attention. Nor was there any artificiality about it. Hospitality was the badge of his clan. He related several striking anecdotes about their lavish hospitality. It was at Darjeeling that I came to know his great regard for strangers or political opponents. At his instance, Satish Babu of Khadi Pratishthan was sent for to discuss with him the plan we had settled of working hand-spinning and khaddar in Bengal. I asked him where he would like Satish Babu to stay. "Of course in this house," he said. "But we are over-crowded here," I said. "Certainly not. He can have my room for that matter," was the retort. Whilst I was thinking of him and his overworked partner, he thought of Satish Babu's comfort. "Besides," he said, "I know that Satish Babu thinks I am prejudiced against him. He is a comparative stranger to me. You know that I do not worry about my other friends. They cannot misunderstand me. Satish Babu must stay in this house."

We talked of different political groups in Bengal and, incidentally, I told him of the charges of bribery and corruption brought against the Swaraj Party. I mentioned to him the fact that Sir Surendranath had invited me to go to his house again before leaving Bengal. He said, "Do go and tell him all about our conversations and my emphatic denial of all charges of bribery and corruption. I am prepared to retire from public life if one such charge against the Party can be proved to be true. The fact is that Bengal political life is one of mutual jealousy and backbiting. The phenomenal rise and success of the Swaraj Party have become unbearable to some people. I want you, therefore, thoroughly to go into all the charges that may be brought against the Party and give your considered judgment. I assure you I do not believe in dishonesty any more than you do. I know that my country cannot be free by dishonest means. You will be rendering a distinct service if you can bring all the parties together or, at

least, rid the air of mutual recrimination. You should specially speak to Shyam Babu and Suresh Babu. Why do they not come to me if they distrust or suspect anything? We may hold different views, but we need not swear at each other." "What about a similar charge against *Forward*? I do not know, because I do not read these newspapers; but I have heard complaints of that nature against *Forward* also", I interposed. "Yes, *Forward* may have been guilty. You know that I do not write for or supervise *Forward* as you do in case of *Young India*. But if people will bring such things to my notice, I will gladly investigate and set matters right. You will, I think, find *Forward* always on the defensive, but one may cross the boundary line even in putting up a defence. As you know, I am investigating a serious case of unpardonable exaggeration in *Forward* if the facts are as they have been put before me. I assure you I have written most strongly about it. I have even sent for the writer." Thus the conversation went on. I found, throughout it all, a scrupulous care about justice to opponents and an honourable meeting of all parties.

"What do you say to convening an All-Parties meeting, or, as Mr. Kelkar suggests it, of the All-India Congress Committee?" I asked. "I do not want it at present," he replied. "The A.I.C.C. is useless, because we Swarajists must play the game and give the fullest trial to the new franchise. I tell you, I am more and more coming round to your position about the charkha. I am afraid we have not played the game everywhere. Here in Bengal, as you have said, you had no opposition from any party. But had I not been laid up, I would have shown the charkha to be a swinging success. I tell you I intended to work the charkha whole-heartedly and I wanted you to help me in the organization; but, as you see, I have been helpless. No revision can take place this year. On the contrary, we must all give the new franchise the fairest trial. I am going to write to the Maharashtra friends about it."

Of the proposed All-Parties Conference he said, "We must not have the conference just yet. I expect big things from Lord Birkenhead. He is a strong man and I like strong men. He is not as bad as he speaks. If we hold the meeting, we must say something on the situation. I do not want to embarrass him by pitching our demands higher than he may be prepared to grant at the present moment. I do not want to disappoint him by understating our demands. We must watch and wait. We can lose nothing by so doing. If his statement is not satisfactory, that may be the time for calling a meeting of all parties to decide upon a common course of action." This was to me a novel reason for not convening the

proposed meeting, so I said, "I shall not call the meeting unless you and Motilalji want it or unless I get a representative requisition. But I must confess to you that I do not share your faith. Look at the Hindu-Muslim differences which are widening. Contemplate the Brahmin and non-Brahmin quarrels. See the political parties in Bengal. We have apparently never been so weak as now. And don't you agree with me that Englishmen have never conceded anything to weakness? I feel that we must make ourselves irresistible before we may expect anything big from England." Deshbandhu became impatient and said, 'You are arguing like a logician. I am speaking to you what I feel. Something within me tells me we are in for something big." I argued no more. I bowed my head in reverence before a faith so robust. I told him I had great regard for English character, I had inestimable friends among them, but I saw that his faith in them was greater than mine. Let Englishmen know what a great friend they have lost in Deshbandhu.

The Pir question at Calcutta troubled him a great deal. He was anxious that I should do what I could for its settlement. He said: "I want to placate the Mussalman feeling. I had hoped that, after the walling-in of the tomb, there would be nothing more heard about it. But now that there is a strong agitation about the disinterment, I cannot resist it. The law seems clearly against the burial on unauthorized ground. Neither Subhash nor Suhrawardy had any authority to grant the permission. But I must carry the Mussalmans with me in all I do. I am trying to induce them to remove the body themselves. I have every hope that they will listen to me."

We discussed the Tarakeshwar affair and the result was embodied in a statement[1] which was to be signed by him and me if it was necessary. We discussed, too, Dr. Besant's manifesto. It was the first in point of time to be discussed as he had promised an early reply to her. The result of that discussion was a letter[2] that he despatched to Dr. Besant.

But the thing that most occupied our time was a discussion of the charkha and khaddar especially in their bearing on village reorganization on which he had set his heart and for which he had collected nearly 1½ lacs of rupees. I told him that his scheme was much too ambitious to be put into force all at once, that I had studied the skeleton which was shown to me by Pratap Babu and

[1] *Vide* "Duty of Satyagrahis", 25-6-1925.
[2] *Vide* "Draft of Letter to Annie Besant", 4-6-1925.

that I had strongly disapproved of it as wholly impractical. Deshbandhu had not seen it. He agreed that it was unworkable. In fact, Pratap Babu had himself admitted its unworkability. I told Deshbandhu that he should make the wheel the centre of all other village activities and that the latter should be made to revolve round the wheel and that they could be added wherever the charkha obtained a footing. I suggested, too, that this village organization should be independent of all political turmoil and, therefore, it should be entrusted to an expert committee with permanent powers whose sole function would be to carry on the village work. I suggested that he should invite Satish Babu to form a committee and take charge of the work on behalf of the Congress. I have reproduced merely the substance of the argument. Deshbandhu not only agreed with it all, but he took down notes and was eager to enforce the scheme at once. He said that he would like to discuss it fully with Satish Babu whilst I was in Darjeeling, and then give instructions for passing the necessary resolution by the Congress Committee. Satish Babu was, therefore, immediately sent for. He came. At first we three had discussions and then I was freed for other work and Deshbandhu had various chats with Satish Babu alone. The latter was to be the first member of the Board. Satcouri Babu was to be the second member and they two were to select a third. They were to have a part of the village fund at once placed at their disposal and I was to give to the Board or Committee a part of the purse that was to be presented to me at Jalpaiguri. This committee, in order to place it on a firm footing, was even to be registered if necessary under the Benevolent Societies Registration Act which Deshbandhu said he would study for the purpose. Deshbandhu told Pratap Babu of the discussions and decision with instructions to carry out the decision.

Such was his passion for the wheel and therethrough of village organization. "If Lord Birkenhead disappoints us," he said, "I do not know what we should do in the Councils. But this I know that we must prosecute your programme of the charkha and organize our villages. We must become an industrious nation once more. We must bring power in the Councils. I must control the young men of Bengal. I must demonstrate, with the aid of the Government if possible and without if necessary, the possibility of achieving swaraj without violence. Non-violence has become as much my final creed as yours for the deliverance of our country. We can have no civil disobedience without non-violence. And without the ability to offer civil resistance, there is

no swaraj. We need not have to offer it in fact, but we must have the ability. I must find work for my impatient young men. I agree with you that there is danger of corruption creeping into our camp if we do not take care. I have learnt from my guru the value of Truth in all our dealings. I want you to live with him for a few days at least. Your need is not the same as mine. But he has given me strength I did not possess before. I see things clearly which I saw dimly before."

But I dare not carry on this part of the conversation any further. I can only tell the reader that it developed into a spiritual discussion or rather discourse, for it was all an endless stream on his part of what he was then doing and what he proposed to do when he was stronger. The discourse gave me an insight into his deeply spiritual nature which I did not possess before. I did not know that it was his ruling passion as it is that of so many distinguished Bengalis. When he first talked, now four years ago, of building a hut on the banks of the Ganges and repeated it at Sassoon Hospital when he came to see me, I laughed within myself at the idea and jocosely said that, when he built his hut, I must share it with him. But I discovered my error at Darjeeling. He was more in earnest about it than about his politics on which he had entered only by force of circumstances.

Nor need the reader consider that I have exhausted all the topics we discussed. I have endeavoured to recall only the principal things. I have omitted his pictures of men both European and Indian.

But if our main conversation always turned round the charkha, our daily routine was not otherwise. The whole household had become a spinning club. Mahadev, Satish Babu and I had become expert teachers. We all had our share of teaching Deshbandhu. He had begun his lessons seriously at Patna. He had asked Rajendra Babu for a teacher. But he was too ill then to make much progress. At Darjeeling he had better hope. His left shoulder was aching, but when the ache was gone, he would do much better, he said. "But mind, I am very stupid with my hands. Ask my wife how helpless I am." "Yes," said Basanti Devi, "he calls me in even for unlocking his little box." "You women are too cunning for men. You keep your husband helpless even in small matters, so as to have your complete mastery over him," I said. The whole house seemed to come down with the ringing of Deshbandhu's laughter. He had both the capacity for heartily weeping and laughing. His weeping he did in secret, like his wife.

During this overwhelming grief, Basanti Devi has disdained to weep even before his dearest ones. But Deshbandhu could laugh before crowds of people and cover them with the sunshine of his laughter. Our serious discussion started with laughter which the whole of that big household heard. He knew that I liked sitting cross-legged. He was reclining in his bedstead. I was in a chair. He could not bear the sight of my sitting in the chair with my legs dangling uncomfortably or attempting to cross them in the chair. So he had a pillow put opposite him on his bedstead and a hand-spun rug arranged on the bedding to make a gadi. He seated me on it. "Do you know, what this reminds me of," I said, as I sat comfortably on it just face to face with him, "My memory goes back to over forty years ago. It was thus my wife and I sat when we were married. The only thing now lacking is the hand-clasp. I wonder what Basanti Devi has to say to all this." And the house rang with a laughter, alas!, no more to be heard.

* * *

The foregoing recollections were written at Bankura on the 8th instant. Lord Birkenhead's speech was published at Calcutta on the 9th and I glanced at it on the same day. I am writing this note on the 10th. I have now carefully read the speech. It gives an added value to the recollections. I know what a shock Lord Birkenhead's speech would have proved to Deshbandhu. Somehow or other he had made up his mind that Lord Birkenhead was going to do something big. In my humble opinion, the speech is a severe disappointment not so much for what it does not give as for the utter inactualities for which the Secretary of State for India has made himself responsible. Every fundamental position that he takes up is challenged by almost every educated Indian, no matter to what party he may belong. The pity of it is that probably he believes all he says. Englishmen have an amazing capacity for self-deception. It no doubt saves them many an uncomfortable situation, but it does infinite harm to the world, a large part of which they rule. They delude themselves into the belief that they do so chiefly if not wholly for its benefit. I must endeavour to examine this curious performance if possible next week. Meanwhile, we owe a duty to the dead man who is one of the parties responsible for making English politicians think about India more than they did before. How would he have acted if he had been alive? There is no cause for despair. There is less for anger. We had no data for expecting anything from Lord Birkenhead. What he has said in praise of English rule in India is not new. A diligent sub-editor has only to take up his scissors and paste to

find out parallel passages in almost identical words from his illustrious predecessors. The speech is a notice to us to set our own house in order. I for one am thankful for it. I have also Deshbandhu's prescription before me. I have shared it with the reader.

Young India, 16-7-1925

224. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY BACK FROM SIRAJGANJ,
Friday [July 10, 1925][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

The train is jolting very much.

I am writing this with nothing particular to say. I may have to despatch directly from here the matter for *Young India*. It is not yet ready. It will, therefore, be sent perhaps by the Assam Mail. Take the Trust-deed and keep it with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The collection here will be about three thousand.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11431

225. GURDWARA LEGISLATION[2]

[*July 11, 1925*]

Both the Punjab Government and the Sikhs are to be congratulated upon the happy ending of the Akali movement. It has required the self-immolation of hundreds of the bravest in the land. It has required the imprisonment of thousands of brave Akalis. The public is familiar with the tale of their sufferings in the jails. Such marvellous sacrifice could not go in vain. Let us hope that the gurdwara reform will now proceed steadily and without a hitch. The Government deserve the congratulations, too, on their release of Akali prisoners and relaxation in the stringency of conditions regarding the *Akhand Path*[3]. I note that the

[1] Gandhiji visited Sirajganj on July 10, 1925.

[2] This was reproduced in *The Hindustan Times*, 17-7-1925.

[3] Continuous reading of a holy book, here the Granth Saheb, the Sikh scripture

conditions imposed by the Government regarding the release and the *Akhand Path* have caused some dissatisfaction. It is difficult to pronounce an opinion on them. At the time of writing this note (11-7-25), I have only the meagre Press telegram before me. But, if the conditions are not humiliating but merely precautionary or designed to save the prestige of the Government, I hope that the Akali friends will not raise unnecessary objection. Their chief aim was to attain the reform of the gurdwaras. This has been completely attained. The rest I regard as a matter of subsidiary, if not trivial, importance. The Akalis will, therefore, be well advised in not being strict in their interpretation of the conditions the Government may have imposed upon the release of prisoners and the performance of the *Akhand Path.*

Young India, 16-7-1925

226. *THIS IS SELF-CONTROL UNDER COMPULSION*

A child-widow, who has given her name and address, laments her condition as follows:[1]

Not only do I get such letters often, but I also come across child-widows wherever I go. I have known countless women and, therefore, can understand their suffering. I have made myself a woman—am always trying to be ever more like one—in order to share women's suffering as best as a man can. I try to fill the place of a mother to many a girl. Hence I fully understand the suffering of this sister.

I feel more and more strongly that there should be no such phenomenon as a child-widow, a contradiction in terms. It is not in remaining a widow, but in self-control that dharma consists. Compulsion and self-control are mutually exclusive terms. The former degrades a human being, whereas the latter is uplifting. Remaining a widow under compulsion is a sin, but doing so of one's own free will is virtue, lends beauty to the soul and acts as a shield for the purity of society. To say that a girl of fifteen remains a widow voluntarily is sheer impudence and ignorance. How can such a girl ever know the misery of a widow's life? It is the duty of her parents to give her every facility to marry again. It is cowardice to submit to a cruel custom, and manliness to defy it.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent requested Gandhiji to take up the cause of widows with the same earnestness with which he championed that of the untouchables.

I have heard a great deal about the way in which marriages are arranged among *Patidars*[1] and the customs which prevail among them. I see no element of exaggeration in this sister's letter.

When I consider what advice I should give to widows who are young, I realize my utter helplessness. It is easy to ask such a girl to marry again. But whom should she marry. Who will find a husband for her? Should she marry outside her caste? Can a girl find a husband by looking for one? Should she marry by advertising for a husband? Is marriage a business arrangement? Where social opinion is hostile or indifferent to her, it is almost impossible for a child-widow to find a husband. And how can I advise a girl to bind herself to any kind of fellow if she fails to find a suitable partner?

I can, therefore, only appeal to the guardians of child-widows. But I doubt if *Navajivan* is ever likely to find its way into their hands. Persons of their class generally do not read newspapers. This is the difficulty in which I find myself.

But I can give this advice to child-widows. They should suffer in patience. They may pour out their suffering before their elders, men or women, and tell them everything they want. If the elders do not understand their feelings or do not agree with them, they should not worry, and, if and when they find suitable partner, should get married. To find a partner, one should like Damayanti, Savitri[2] and Parvati[3] in the past, do *tapascharya* appropriate and possible in this age. That *tapascharya* is study. For a widow, there is nothing better than intellectual and spiritual studies and physical activity to steady the mind. They can do physical *tapascharya* by devoting every moment of their time to the spinning-wheel, intellectual *tapascharya* by devoting themselves to literary studies and spiritual *tapascharya* by purifying themselves inwardly, by striving to realize the *atman*. The elders cannot come in their way in any of these pursuits; and, even if they try, they cannot succeed. Everyone has a right to do these three things. If a widow is denied this right, she should certainly resort to satyagraha.

I know that this course, too, is difficult. But the right course always seems difficult at first; we have the Lord's assurance, however, that in the end we shall not find it difficult.

[1] A community in Gujarat

[2] Wife of Satyavan; whom she retrieved from Death

[3] Who performed severe penance to secure Siva as her husband

The elders of such widows will have reason for regret afterwards if they refuse to follow the course of wisdom now, for I witness immorality everywhere. By placing restrictions on a widow, we do not protect either her or the family or dharma. I see the degradation of all three before our very eyes.

Let the guardians of child-widows follow the course of wisdom.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

227. *STOP PUBLISHING "NAVAJIVAN"*

A reader has written a long letter to me, which I summarize in my own words since his language does not admit of compression. He says:

> Readers are tired of reading all the time about the spinning-wheel in *Navajivan*. If you bring out a separate Spinning-wheel Number every month as you publish an Education Number, that will save money and you may also get readers for it. This advice may be offered to you since you do not publish *Navajivan* for profit. If you want that the weekly *Navajivan* must continue, you should use it to tell the people about other activities of the kind which will inspire fear in the British. Look at what Turkey has done. In the world as we find it, there is no love but what is inspired by fear.

I am never without such advisers. Since in answering their questions from time to time, I can also explain the aim of *Navajivan*, a discussion of the subject is not without purpose. It is not true to say that *Navajivan* discusses only the spinning-wheel, but it may be said that the spinning-wheel gets the first importance. However, I can see from the subscribers that still remain that they do not mind exclusive attention to the spinning-wheel.

Navajivan is not run for making money, nor is it intended for promoting any and every kind of activity: it is only a medium for the propagation of my ideas. *Navajivan* will not continue publication with the help of loans, or seek to meet its expenses by accepting advertisements. Nor will it be brought out and offered free to readers, with the help of donations from a few friends. Its readers should regard themselves as its proprietors. *Navajivan* is my weekly letter to them. They will spend money on it, subscribe to it and keep it alive so long as the ideas presented through it appeal to

them, for every week I pour out my soul in it and I know that nothing but good can result from studying a thing which expresses the very heart of its author, even though he may be an illiterate person.

Navajivan is an organ for telling the people about the invaluable method of satyagraha. If I may say so, I live only to teach its use. The idea is not new. I am convinced that I am only putting before the people an old thing in a somewhat new language and a new garb. I believe that we can secure swaraj only through satyagraha. Swaraj is our life-breath and, deprived of it, we are in the condition of a man choking without air. I am quite clear in my mind that, if I succeed in explaining to the people the basic principles of satyagraha, an easy path will have been discovered, which the country and the world can follow. It is possible, of course, that I may die before I have succeeded in leading the people to this royal road.

Even if that happens, nothing will have been lost. It is an immutable law that a good deed done is never wasted.

This path of satyagraha cannot be followed except with the help of the spinning-wheel. God, for the hungry, is food. This is why the Upanishads, even describe food as *Brahman*. Food is produced by the labour of man's body. Since we do not work enough with our bodies, we get less food. People remain unemployed during four months in a year. The net result of this has been that the nation has lost its vitality. The spinning-wheel is an unrivalled means of restoring strength to it and ending its hunger. One drop of rain is of no consequence, but an infinite number of them have such power of nourishing that they give new life to the whole world every year. In the same way, it may be that one spinning-wheel will seem to achieve nothing, but a multitude of them have as much power, at least, as a mass of rain drops. In one sense, it has more. One drop of water by itself will be wasted; a mass of them out of season may do harm. But even one spinning-wheel will bring some gain to the person who works on it. There is no time of the year when the spinning-wheel will be out of season. That is why "Here no effort undertaken is lost, no disaster befalls. Even a little of this righteous course delivers one from great fear."[1]

These being my convictions, *Navajivan* would have no work left if it did not give the highest place to the spinning-wheel.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 40

It is, moreover, a lesson in peace, and a potent means of self-purification. There are other means, too, of self-purification which *Navajivan* discusses, and will continue to discuss, from time to time. All articles, in the final analysis, are concerned with one idea, namely, self-purification, swaraj, satyagraha. *Navajivan's* aim is to increase our inner strength and help us to win swaraj through it. If, therefore, it discusses subjects like Council-entry, it is only with the aim of promoting self-purification, of developing spiritual strength. *Navajivan* can give nothing exciting just now, for there is no gain in doing so. Time spent in criticizing others is merely wasted. Criticism has some meaning only when it is backed by strength. Those who understand this point will appreciate the policy followed in *Navajivan* and will not stop reading it. The paper will continue as long as it has a fair number of subscribers. When the number falls below a certain limit, I will not lose a moment, nor shall I feel one pang of heart, in stopping its publication.

And even if *Navajivan* stops publication, my spinning-wheel will not stop, for I do not even need friends to help me in keeping it going.

The other piece of advice which the correspondent gives is that I should suggest something which will inspire fear in the hearts of the British. That thing is against my very nature and I can never bring myself to do it. I want to win over the British through love. It may be that this is beyond the capacity of the country to attempt. It can adopt the path of violence. But it will not, in that case, need my services, since I am not a worthy soldier in such an effort. Every weapon which I find it possible to employ has its roots in love or truth. My plan may be wrong; my intention is never unworthy.

This is *Navajivan's* limitation and mine.

Another reader has made a different suggestion, which also I shall discuss here. He says that people find the price of five pice much too high. If the price is kept at one pice, he says, there will be a large number of subscribers and *Navajivan* will not have to draw from its own resources. Those who understand something about accounts will see that, if a thing is priced below a certain level, the larger its sale the greater will be the loss. That is, increase in sales will be a gain only if the thing is sold at profit. If a paper is published at a loss, as the sales increase the loss will increase. At first *Navajivan* used to be published at a loss. After due calculations, the subscription has been fixed at a suitable rate. It certainly yields some profit, which increases when the sales increase. If anyone feels inclined to suggest that the price should be fixed

so as to eliminate this profit, he should know that the profit is not large enough for its elimination to make a difference to the rate of subscription.[1] *Navajivan* is not in such a position that it can be offered at one or two pice. But I may say, at the same time, that it is sent altogether free whenever this seems justified. I do not know many persons who find the price of *Navajivan* too high, but who would be glad to read it if they got a free copy. If there are any such persons, I should certainly like to have their names and addresses, for some friends have offered help to enable us to send free copies of *Navajivan*, and I would certainly avail myself of this offer for the sake of the readers. If there are such persons, they should write to the Manager, who, if he thinks it proper, will send them *Navajivan* free or at a reduced rate of subscription. But readers should understand that the cost of such copies will be borne by some friend or other, and not by *Navajivan*, for it is no longer in a position to do so.

This correspondent also seems to believe that *Navajivan* still meets the loss incurred on *Young India*. This is not true. *Young India* does not now run at a loss. *Hindi Navajivan* may still be said to be in that position. Its sales have not become so regular that it can be considered to be self-supporting. They still rise and fall. But the loss on its account is also not being borne exclusively by the subscribers of *Navajivan*. It is borne by the institution as a whole, i.e., by all its departments jointly. Friends could have borne the loss, but, knowing that this family was not likely to give up its pledge to accept no help from outside, they did not press the offer.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

[1] On June 30 it was resolved to effect the following two changes in regard to *Navajivan*: 1. When the present stock of paper is exhausted, paper of better quality should be used for *Navajivan*. 2. At present, subscribers are charged separately for the supplements to *Navajivan* brought out periodically whenever there is excess of matter; this should be stopped and, with effect from the commencement of *Navajivan's* seventh year (September 1925), whenever there is excess of matter, extra pages should be printed and given free to the readers as was done formerly.

228. KHADI PRATISHTHAN

Readers of *Navajivan* know how deeply I have been impressed by the work of the Bengal Khadi Pratishthan. After reading my report, Shri Lakshmidas[1] sent Shri Mathuradas to inspect its work; the latter has written down the conclusions which he has arrived at after personal inquiry and given me a copy of the report. However careful my examination might have been, it could not be treated as scientific. Shri Mathuradas's inquiry, on the other hand, was scientific, for he has specialized in this field, has conducted careful inquiries into the working of other such establishments and is so well informed about the finances of some of them that he can reel off precise figures. I, therefore, attach greater value to his inquiry than to mine. In my report the reader would find my conclusions, but, little of the evidence on which they are based, whereas in the report of this scientific inquiry he would get the evidence as well. Shri Mathuradas's inquiry being of this character, its results are given elsewhere in this issue.

I should like khadi workers to read the report very carefully. The distinguishing feature of the Khadi Pratishthan is that it takes work from its employees like any business establishment and pays them adequately. But, even then, it has on its staff men who work in a spirit of self-sacrifice, and the reason is that the two chief workers, Acharya Ray and his right-hand man, Satish Babu, are men of this type. Another reason is that, though the methods of work followed are those of a business establishment, selfish motives find no place in it.

I told the merchants in Jalpaiguri[2] that this was the key to the country's freedom. Our merchants helped in the enslavement of India for the sake of their trade, and so the country will come into its own again only when this class learns to think less of self-interest and more of public interest. It is not enough that they should contribute crores. They are doing that. We shall reach our goal when they dedicate their intelligence to the service of the country. A merchant who has done this will not think of amassing wealth for himself; he will earn it for the country. He will not, moreover, consider which business will earn most for the

[1] Lakshmidas Asar, an inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram who specialized in khadi and village industries

[2] In Bengal, where a public meeting was held on June 10, 1925

country; he will rather think which trade will help the largest number among the masses to earn most by working in their own villages. We have got a few business men of this type, and that is why we are making the progress we see today. Anyone of us can measure this progress by making an elementary calculation. I praise Satish Babu's work because, though he has sacrificed his business worth millions and dedicated his intelligence, the services of the members of his family and his resources to the propagation of khadi, he is not in the least conscious of his self-sacrifice, or rather he has no trace of pride for having done all this. This is because he has found joy in self-sacrifice. It would be impossible for him to live without it.

The reader need not conclude from my eulogy that, from a business point of view, Satish Babu's work is above criticism. If there is anything in it deserving of criticism, it is due to no fault of his. He lacks, to that extent, knowledge of business matters. This ignorance will disappear with experience. Let us hope that many more such business men of intelligence will sacrifice their all and come forward to do business in khadi not with an eye to profit but for the sake of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

229. *MY NOTES*

I give below the summary of a statement[1], sent to me by the All-India Khadi Association, relating to the disposal of the yarn received by it in virtue of the resolution on the subject passed last year by the All-India Congress Committee.

These facts teach us some important lessons. An organization is like a machine. If in a machine one screw becomes loose, it slows down or, sometimes, even breaks down; the same thing happens to organizations, especially organizations doing constructive work. If attention is not paid even to the minutest details of their working, production will fall. Weak yarn, carelessly wound bundles of yarn, bundles of yarn not stored properly—any such negligence will bring down the quality of khadi, raise the cost of weaving and reduce its speed. We observe, too, that the slow progress in work was wholly due to negligence at the spinning stage.

[1] The statement is not translated here.

SPINNERS, BEWARE!

The khadi produced has been priced at market rates, for the quantity available was so little that there was no meaning in selling it at reduced price. It would also have been a problem, if the khadi were offered at reduced price, to decide who had the prior right to buy it. That such a problem should not arise over a small stock of khadi was one reason for my advice that it should be sold at market rates.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

230. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK[1]

July 12, 1925

It is good to read clean books, but it is better to weave into our lives that which we read in ennobling literature.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.W. 6051. Courtesy: Public Library, Allahabad

231. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJSHAHI[2]

July 12, 1925

After thanking those who gave him addresses and for the presents[3] made to him, Mahatmaji explained that he had only two objects in view in making his tour. His first object was to secure 10 lakhs of rupees for Deshbandhu Memorial. He hoped to receive suitable donation towards the Memorial Fund from the people of Rajshahi, where there were many big zamindars, pleaders and business men. He asked everyone to contribute his mite to this fund. He told that millions of people were lamenting the death of Deshbandhu Das and he wanted to utilize this feeling of deep love for Deshbandhu to increase the strength and power of Hindustan. He pointed out that our first duty was to render our utmost help for the Memorial of Deshbandhu and then to carry out the wishes of late Deshbandhu.

[1] Of the Rajshahi Public Library

[2] Gandhiji received addresses from the Reception Committee, the Municipality, the District and Local Boards, and other public organizations. His reply in Hindi was translated into Bengali by Satish Chandra Das Gupta.

[3] Set of brass utensils made at Kalam and a charkha that could be folded into a small box

Mahatmaji then spoke about his meeting with Deshbandhu at Darjeeling, when Deshbandhu impressed it clearly that nothing could be done without organizing the villagers and that charkha was the main centre of work for this village organization. He asked the people to act in accordance with the wishes of late Deshbandhu, viz., (1) to work on charkha for at least half an hour a day, (2) to wear khaddar and (3) to maintain Hindu-Muslim unity, which he said occupied the first place in Deshbandhu's talk with him at Darjeeling.

Mahatmaji also told the people that Deshbandhu had no feeling of hatred for any man and that Deshbandhu had by his own life demonstrated that untouchability had no place in religion. Mahatmaji again asked the people to act up to the wishes of Deshbandhu and win swaraj if they really loved and felt for Deshbandhu.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-7-1925

232. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[CALCUTTA][1]
Ashad Vad 4 [*July 13, 1925*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You say you don't know what to write. Does it mean that you are worried? If so, please stop worrying. There is no cause whatever for it. One should not be upset because of the loss of money. If there is any other reason for worry, let me know. You should not feel nervous to go to the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

My programme is uncertain. I shall have to spend the whole of this month here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9216

[1] The postmark shows that the letter was posted at Calcutta on July 13.

233. *REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE*[1]

ON TRAIN TO JESSORE,
[On or before *July 14, 1925*][2]

Q. (1) Do you think that the Congress creed should be changed for your being its member? If you think change is essential, will you define the creed acceptable to yourself?

A. If it is changed, the alternative of buying and paying yarn should be done away with.

(2) If there is an annual money contribution as well as the yarn quota in the alternative, as the franchise qualification, will it be acceptable to you?

Anything will be acceptable to me that is acceptable to the Swaraj Party.

(3) If the Congress revokes the yarn franchise and, instead of delegating to the Swarajists the power to determine political work in the legislatures, frames a political programme of its own, including work in the Councils, will you co-operate in carrying it out?

So far as I know myself at present, I think I would not be able to lead such an organization.

(4) What, in your opinion, should the Congress programme inside as well as outside the Councils be?

The present programme.

(5) Do you think by constitutional agitation alone the British people will be persuaded to give us Home Rule?

I am inclined to think not.

(6) If extra-constitutional agitation is essential, what form or forms of direct action will you suggest and will you recommend to the Congress, the contesting of elections to the legislatures on the issue of non-payment of taxes?

Civil disobedience at present excluding non-payment of taxes is the only form of direct action feasible.

(7) Are you prepared personally to give up the use of foreign cloth? If you are still using it, will you help the swadeshi movement by giving it up?

I do not use foreign cloth. For me khaddar is the only swadeshi essential.

[1] Which *The Bombay Chronicle* had addressed to leaders of various political parties

[2] Gandhiji was in Calcutta on July 13 and in Jessore on July 14. It is not clear whether he left Calcutta for Jessore on July 13 or 14.

(8) If you are elected an M.L.C.[1] in your province, will you, under the present circumstances, accept a ministership?

Thank God I am legally barred.

(9) If the Reading-Birkenhead negotiations are disappointing to you, what course will you advise the public to take in addition to vigorous vocal protest and will you support the programme of persistent refusal of supplies before redress of grievances?

If I have the power, I would use the disappointment for achieving the only possible thing, viz., exclusion of foreign cloth.

(10) If the essential provisions of the Commonwealth of India Bill are satisfactory to you, will you, in the event of its non-acceptance by Parliament before October 1926, recommend to the Congress the contesting of elections to the legislatures on the issue of non-payment of taxes?

This is answered elsewhere.

(11) Do you think the Swarajists are actively working in the country in furtherance of the constructive programme?

Not everywhere; not all.

(12) Do you think the differences in the mental attitudes and political methods of Congressmen on the one hand and the Independents or liberals on the other are too vital to be harmonized by mutual adjustments and to make united action on their part possible?

They appear to be so. I hope that the appearance is deceptive.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-7-1925

234. A PLEA FOR TRUTH

I have not worried the readers of *Young India* with an account of the Kidderpore Hindu-Muslim riot on the *Bakr-Id* day, although I happened to be on the scene of the riot only a few hours after it had taken place. I did, however, give a long interview[2] to the Associated Press almost after my return to Russa Road from Kidderpore. In the interview, I gave it as my deliberate opinion that the Hindu labourers were wholly in the wrong. This statement has enraged some of my Hindu correspondents who have favoured me with most abusive and offensive letters protesting

[1] Member of the Legislative Council

[2] For the interview of July 2, *vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 2-7-1925.

against my having found fault with the Hindus. One of them would have me adopt a Muslim name. I take notice of this correspondence in order to show to what pass some of us have come in our blind zeal for our respective faiths. We refuse to see anything wrong in ourselves. When such becomes the normal state of a majority of people belonging to a particular faith, that faith is dying. For nothing based on a lie can persist for any length of time.

I venture to suggest that I have rendered a service to Hinduism by exposing without any reservation the wrong done by the Hindu labourers in question. They, the labourers themselves, did not resent my plain speaking. On the contrary, they seemed to be grateful for it. They felt penitent, admitted the wrong done and sincerely apologized for it.

What was I to do, if I was not to speak out about what I saw with my own eyes and felt within me? Was I to prevaricate for the sake of protecting the guilty? Was I to refuse to give the interview when the ubiquitous Press man sought me out at midnight? I would have forfeited the right to call myself a Hindu, been unworthy of holding the office of President of the Congress and sullied my name as a satyagrahi if I had hesitated to tell the truth when the telling of it had become relevant. Let Hindus not be guilty of the charge they do not hesitate to bring against Mussalmans, viz., that of committing a wrong and then seeking to hide it.

One correspondent says when Hindus sought help in Delhi, I pleaded helplessness, when my presence is sought in Lucknow I evade it, but when it is a matter of condemning Hindus, I hasten to the scene of action and thoughtlessly judge them. Let it be known that I went to Kidderpore on the strength of an invitation received from a Hindu on behalf of the Hindus and upon a call from Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta who had preceded me. In spite of my helplessness, if I heard of an actual fight and especially if I found that I was wanted by either party, I should hasten to the rescue. It is when one party only calls me to adjust a quarrel or prevent it, I should plead helplessness because of loss of influence among a certain class of Hindus and Mussalmans. The difference between the two positions is too obvious to need pointing out.

But it is urged by the correspondents, as it was urged by a deputation that waited on me, that by my severe condemnation of the Hindus, I had encouraged the Mussalmans to commit assaults on innocent men and exposed the Bazar Hindu shopkeepers to looting and worse by Mussalman *goondas*. I should feel sorry if

my condemnation of a Hindu misdeed should give rise to a Mussalman misdeed. But I could even then be not deterred from doing the right thing. And why should Hindus be afraid of Mussalman reprisals? Surely it would be right for Hindus, if they cannot follow my method of non-violence and resignation—and I admit that it is most difficult for propertied men to do so—to defend themselves by every means at their disposal. To be men we must shed cowardice, whether we are Hindus or Mussalmans, and learn the art of self-defence. No amount of hide and seek can avert the certain danger that awaits those who will not learn to defend themselves, although they would like to be defended by others. My condemnation of Hindus of Kidderpore does not carry with it condemnation of those who defend themselves when attacked. Had the Hindus instead of being the aggressors been found defending themselves against heavy odds and had died in the attempt, I would have praised their valour. But at Kidderpore, so far as I know they were in an overwhelming majority, they were the aggressors. The Mussalmans had given them no cause for quarrel. I would unhesitatingly condemn unprovoked violence as I had no difficulty about condemning the Mussalman misdeeds in Kohat and Gulbarga which I thought were utterly uncalled for. I can even understand two blows against one, but I cannot reconcile myself to any blow without the slightest provocation or provocation worked up for the occasion.

Young India, 16-7-1925

235. WHAT IS TAMMANY HALL?

Exception has been taken to my defence at a Memorial meeting of the memory of Deshbandhu against the charge of Tammany Hall methods. It has been taken on the ground that such a reference at a Memorial meeting was a jarring note. I believe that I have the sense of the delicate. I knew what I was doing. I was presenting Deshbandhu's life to the students of Calcutta. I had in my mind audible whispers about Tammany Hall methods alleged to have been adopted by Deshbandhu. And as I had a most vivid recollection of my conversation with him on the matter, I felt that I would have been false to the sacred memory of a comrade if I had not assured the students of the baselessness of the charge. After all, we will not make the memory of our distinguished countrymen sacred by covering their blemishes. It should be permissible to cherish the memory of our heroes at the same

time that we acknowledge their proved blemishes. False delicacy is no delicacy. If Deshbandhu was guilty of Tammany Hall methods, let us own the fact and, whilst treasuring all that was noblest in him, let us beware of his particular methods. But believing as I did that he was not guilty of those methods, I could not conceive a happier occasion than the one I had at the University Institute.[1]

But what are Tammany Hall methods? If I know them correctly, it is a name given to the machinations secret and open resorted to by a class of men in America for seizing for their selfish end corporations and offices in which they do not hesitate to make use of fraud, bribery and every form of public corruption. I had the most emphatic repudiation from Deshbandhu's most trusted lieutenants and, then, at Darjeeling, from Deshbandhu himself, with the invitation to investigate such charges and publicly denounce every proved charge of bribery or corruption. The first indispensable test of Tammany Hall is obviously lacking. Neither Deshbandhu nor his lieutenants to his knowledge had any selfish ends to serve. Indeed, such people could not long remain with him. So if any one bribed anybody else, it was for an unselfish end. But, personally, I draw no distinction between the two forms of bribery. Nor did Deshbandhu draw any. He said to me emphatically that he could not, even if he would, free his country by corrupt methods, if only because the Government had reduced bribery or corruption to a perfect science. The truth is that for the first time, within the experience of the present generation we have a well-drilled, disciplined and compact political party functioning in the Councils and the Assembly. It, therefore, seems unthinkable to some that such a party could be kept together without bribery and corruption. The Government has done their best to discredit the party by all the means at its command. Rival political parties have lent a ready ear to every rumour or talk about bribery. There is no doubt that some people honestly believe that bribery was one of the means resorted to by Deshbandhu for keeping the Party together and gaining other support at crucial moments in the Council.

So far as I know, there is no foundation for the charge. The memory of Deshbandhu will not suffer by anyone who can clearly establish the charge of his having done so. It is better that the public know definitely what is said in inaudible tones. After all, the charge was not merely against the Deshbandhu, rather it was

[1] *Vide* "Speech at University Institute, Calcutta", 30-6-1925.

more against his party than against him personally. Though he is no more among us, the Party survives. And if I know it, I know that it is capable of standing the searchlight of investigation if anyone has proof of corruption against it.

Young India, 16-7-1925

236. CALCUTTA'S MAYOR

Some friends in Bengal have resented my interference[1] in the matter of the choice of the Mayor of Calcutta. Perhaps common courtesy requires an explanation from me. Whilst after the national loss I decided to stand by Bengal in the hour of her greatest need and, so far as was possible, to wipe her tears and to comfort Basanti Devi as also the fatherless children, I had also decided not to force myself on any of them, but humbly to hold myself at their disposal. It was a simple duty I owed to the memory of a departed friend and comrade. The inauguration of an All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund for which I was chiefly responsible made my stay in Bengal peremptory. Events have justified the wisdom of my decision.

But I had little expected that I should have to give any advice or guidance in the selection of the Mayor of Calcutta in the place of Deshbandhu. It was a task I would gladly have avoided. But for a soldier there is often no choice. The matter was referred to me by parties interested in the selection. And I could not shirk the responsibility, as I could not conscientiously plead incapacity. Having been drawn into the vortex, there was no escape from it till the matter was formally decided by the Congress Municipal Party.

Whether the advice I tendered was sound or not, whether it was in the interest of the city or not is undoubtedly a matter which is capable of many opinions. I can only say that I gave the advice that, in my opinion, was the best for the country and for the City of Palaces. I had before me a tradition and a policy as my measure. My duty lay in doing that which, in my opinion, Deshbandhu would have done if he was with us in the flesh, in so far as it was in no way in conflict with known and recognized ethical principles. The Congress has for the past four years decided to capture municipalities and local boards in its own interest and for the furtherance of its constructive programme. The idea

1 *Vide* "Speech at Swarajist Councillors' Meeting", 9-7-1925.

behind the capture was not better care of sanitation, but acquisition of greater political power. There was nothing wrong in this ambition. The Government itself has used these institutions of its creation more for the consolidation of its power and enhancement of its prestige than for better sanitation. I have known London county council elections fought on political issues. And when political fever has run high, a municipal election has been used as an index for gauging the political barometer. And if it has been considered necessary to use municipalities in England for political purposes, much more is it so in a country where a whole nation lies under the political domination of another. Once grant the advisability of utilizing the machinery created by the Government, the capture of municipal institutions for gaining political power is an inevitable step. Deshbandhu captured the Corporation of Calcutta to that end and he used it most effectively for the consolidation of the power of the Congress or, which is almost the same thing in Bengal, the Swaraj Party. Did he thereby neglect the interest of the corporation? I venture to say emphatically no. On the contrary, his municipal ambition was as high as the political.

Who was then to be the Mayor in his place? It was a gift within the power of the party of his creation. It must be bestowed upon him who could best carry out the tradition bequeathed by the great chief and who could gain additional prestige for the Party, it being understood that he was also, in the Party, the best person considered from the purely Municipal standpoint. In my opinion, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta was the fittest person answering these requirements. And if he was good enough to lead the Swaraj Party, he deserved all the adventitious support that could be given to him in order to enable him to wear Deshbandhu's mantle with grace and dignity.

But could he do justice to the triple burden? He was already elected President of the Provincial Congress Committee. Could he lead the Swaraj Party, and, at the same time, carry out the constructive programme of the Congress and discharge the heavy responsibility of the Mayoralty of Calcutta? What was the use of the triple honour if the burden was to break him? My answer was that Mr. Sen Gupta alone was the best judge of his own capacity. The power should be given him if he needed and wanted it. It should not be thrust upon him. It was, undoubtedly, a dangerous experiment if Mr. Sen Gupta was a schemer, putting his own interest before the country's. In that case, it was dangerous even to make him leader of the Swaraj Party. If he was

above suspicion, he should have the Mayoralty if he needed it for his work and if he could creditably discharge the burden. No Congressman worthy of the name, much less the successor of Deshbandhu, could dare seek honour for honour's sake. For me, Mr. Sen Gupta occupied the position of MacSwiney, who wanted to become the Lord Mayor of Cork, not so that he might gain any honour for himself, but so that he might face the danger that was then in store for him who occupied the exalted position. The position of the successor of Deshbandhu is, if possible, fraught with greater danger than MacSwiney had to face. MacSwiney put his life at stake. Deshbandhu's successor had to put his whole reputation at stake. The slightest deviation from the standard of sacrifice and honour bequeathed by Deshbandhu might blast his successor's reputation for life,—a living death worse than the death of the mere body. Thus I reasoned to myself and my friends in pressing Mr. Sen Gupta's claim to the Mayoralty of Calcutta. And I am thankful to be able to record that both the Congress Party and the Congress Municipal Party understood and appreciated my argument and, with but few dissentients, accepted the nomination of Mr. Sen Gupta. I only hope that they will make his burden as light as it is possible for them to make. I have no doubt in my mind that Mr. Sen Gupta will try to live up to the high standard set by Deshbandhu.

But let no one regard this as a precedent for all time. On pure principle it is wrong to combine three important functions in one person, no matter how able he may be. No man can do full justice to three heavy tasks. The temptation, too, for self-aggrandizement for any man is too great. It is unfair to expose anyone to avoidable temptation. Moreover, even though political parties may capture municipal bodies, it would be wrong to give municipal responsibilities to active politicians. We must, even in our bondage, treat municipal matters on their own merits and create municipal specialists who would refuse to be guided by political considerations in the discharge of their municipal duties. If we do not take all these precautions, our experiment of capturing municipal bodies is foredoomed to failure. Municipal life requires a training which a busy politician is not always fitted for. A municipal councillor, therefore, best serves his political party by divesting himself of the politician whilst he is occupying the municipal chair, even as a judge, on assuming office, ceases to be an advocate or a politician. The reason why, in spite of my love of municipal life and my knowledge of its utmost importance, I have permitted myself to advise the dangerous combination of

three functions in one person is because I conceive the present to be an extraordinary occasion requiring a drastic, nay, a dangerous step. Dases are not born every day. Deshbandhu has left a gap which it is impossible for any man to fill. He who has to shoulder the burden left by him needs, therefore, extraordinary props. And on the assumption of average ability and honesty, he should have them. But, so far as I am concerned, this experiment, I hope, is the first and the last in my life. I have countenanced it with a full sense of my responsibility and the danger attendant upon it. May God grant the necessary wisdom and the power to Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta. Let the citizens of Calcutta rest assured that the election of an active politician is not intended to be a menace to the healthy growth of the municipal life of Calcutta. We have precedents for it in the brilliant example of Pherozeshah Mehta than whom we never had a better President of a corporation or a better councillor. His tradition was kept up last year by Vithalbhai Patel, who, even his opponents admitted, discharged the burden of his high office with great ability and equally great impartiality. And Vithalbhai Patel is nothing if he is not a fiercely active politician. In stating my position, I have really dealt with the highest form of municipal life. That type has yet to be evolved by us in India. And I am hoping that it would be the privilege of the Congress to do so. It will not be till we have men whose ambition will be more than fully satisfied if they can keep the gutters and closets of their cities scrupulously clean and supply the purest milk at the cheapest rates and rid them of drunkenness and prostitution.

Young India, 16-7-1925

237. *NOTES*

A Memorial Tour

The tour that I am now making in Bengal has been turned into a Memorial tour. I was disinclined to tear myself away from Calcutta at the present moment and whilst the ten lacs are uncollected. But I had not the heart to disappoint the people of the respective Districts which I was under promise to visit. But I had warned the people that my tour this time would be for collecting the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund and delivering his message. And even from the Memorial standpoint, I am glad I am touring. The response of the poor people, both men and women,

has been marvellous everywhere. They have needed no coaxing. They have given to the fullest measure for the asking. It has been a common experience to find old widows undoing the little knots of the corners of their saris and giving up all they had in them. Often have I felt like returning such donations. But, on second thoughts, I have not only reconciled myself to them, but felt it to be a pleasing duty to receive them. Had not Deshbandhu given his all? And was not the hospital to be for women in distress? Were not some poor widows destined to receive training as nurses at the institution that will soon be founded? Why should I doubt the law of God which says that He rewards tenfold those who give their all for a good cause? Nor have the well-to-do been unwilling to pay. I was not prepared for ornaments at women's meetings in the *mofussil*. But in no place have the good sisters failed to give their ornaments. At Serajgunj two of them gave away their heavy gold chains. It is remarkable too that, in all the four places I have visited at the time of writing these notes, the collections at the women's meetings, though naturally attended by hundreds against men's thousands, have been as much as at the men's.

Sign of Poverty

These collections have been a study in more ways than one. They have been an ocular demonstration of the poverty of the masses. I am collecting from thousands of them. At every meeting coppers have abounded. In many cases, they have given even half pices. Not because the people have been unwilling to give more, but because to my knowledge they had no other coins. They undid their knots or emptied their pockets in my presence.

Silent Workers

From Serajgunj to Ishurdi we have been travelling in a slow train. It is a branch service. There are stations every ten minutes. Villagers have attended the stations in their hundreds and, at several places, in their thousands and have paid their pice. The whole of this great demonstration has been arranged by the silent, selfless youth of Bengal. Their names will never be noted in the newspapers. They probably do not even want themselves to be advertised. Their sterling work is their advertisement. Without them the villagers would have known nothing. They, the young men, are their walking newspapers. For they neither read nor write. And those few that do are too poor to buy newspapers. All honour to these brave, sacrificing servants of India. Every one of the meetings at these stations has been most orderly, noise-

less, solemn and business-like. Swaraj will certainly come through these young lovers of their country. Nor must I omit to mention the railway officials. The railway authorities from the highest to the lowest have been exceptionally courteous and attentive throughout my previous tour, but I am undoubtedly more in need of their help now than before. The task of collection from thousands at wayside stations within a few minutes is no light task. And yet it has been achieved because they too conspired with the people and the volunteers to make my task as light as possible. Be it noted that I had to alight at all the stations and pass through crowds, make the collection and return to my compartment in time. Deshbandhu dead is a more powerful force for drawing the best out of men than he was when he was alive. His countrymen realize the debt they owe him and, therefore, to their country.

What of the House?

Doubts have been raised as to whether the proposed hospital is to be opened in the very mansion that has belonged to his family for two generations. I thought that the matter was absolutely clear in the appeal signed by Lord Sinha and others. That mansion is already in the hands of the trustees for such purposes as a hospital and the like. Its value is over three lacs. It is burdened with a debt of over two lacs. The debt will be paid naturally out of the collections being now made. But the trustees of the Memorial will then acquire a property worth three lacs for two lacs. In other words, the trustees will have eleven lacs of capital when they have finished their collection of ten lacs.

To Doubters

There are still people who ask me whether I am really serious and sanguine about collecting 10 lacs. All I can say is that I do not know Bengal at all if it does not give 10 lacs for this Memorial towards which I have not yet met a single person who has refused to give something. The question of collecting the amount is merely a question of time and organization. I do not entertain the slightest doubt about the success of the collection.

Not Inspiring?

I have answered locally the charge that the object of the Memorial is not inspiring. The sceptics imply thereby that the object should have been political. But let me remind them that the signatories to the appeal had no choice. Those who want to revere Deshbandhu's memory cannot do so if they do not res-

pect his own wishes. I hold that his wishes must be a first charge upon any collection that may be made by us, the survivors, to perpetuate his memory. Deshbandhu knew what he was oing when he made over his property to a trust. He deliberately chose to give it for a charitable, not a political, purpose. The survivors are not only, therefore, bound to acquire the house for the nation, but also to use it for the purpose intended by the donor. Bengal is, therefore, in my opinion, in honour bound to use the mansion as a hospital for women and an institution for training nurses. I hear that in some places Bengalis are collecting funds for local memorials. I hope that every city will have a memorial worthy of the great patriot. But that time is not yet. In my humble opinion, the honour of every Bengali who cherishes Deshbandhu's memory is pledged to finish the collection of 10 lacs for the All-Bengal Memorial before diverting a single pice for a local memorial. The Bengalis outside Bengal, beware. They have not all yet made their returns. If all the Bengalis who have known Deshbandhu will not exert themselves, the collection is likely to be unduly prolonged. I hope, therefore, that those Bengalis who read these notes will exert themselves to the utmost within their own circles to secure the best subscriptions.

Young India, 16-7-1925

238. TO REMOVE A MISGIVING

I have lately been calling on a number of rich people to collect donations for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. One of them was Shri Sadhuram Tularam. There I not only secured a generous donation, but also had occasion to talk to those present about religious matters. Untouchability was mentioned and it was said that something had appeared in the newspapers attributing to me the view that we should interdine and intermarry with the so-called untouchables. What I said to disabuse them regarding this only seemed to surprise those who had raised the point, and they suggested that I might publish a summary of what I told them in the *Hindi Navajivan*. I have accepted the suggestion and give here the required summary.

I must make it clear to the people, in the first place, that I do not as a rule read newspapers and on the rare occasions when I do, I find it impossible to repudiate all the false things that are attributed to me. If, therefore, anyone at any time has a doubt, he should ask me what I had said on any given occasion. Now,

if someone has said in the newspapers that I stand for or encourage interdining and intermarrying with our untouchable brethren, he has made a mistake. I have stated categorically a thousand times that abolition of untouchability does not mean the abolition of the social restraints governing eating and marrying. With whom shall one eat or marry is an entirely different question and I do not find it necessary at the moment to pronounce upon it. I believe on the contrary that our mixing the two questions may impede the reform we wish to bring about. It is the duty of everyone who considers himself a Hindu to work for the eradication of untouchability. By mixing it up with other issues we shall be harming our cause.

Yes, about accepting water to drink I shall say something. If we accept clean water from a Sudra, as we should and as we do, we should also accept water at the hands of an untouchable. I recognize only four *varnas*. There is to me no fifth *varna* called the untouchables. We must, therefore, eradicate untouchability, and the sufferings of the Hindus considered untouchable, and purify Hinduism as well as ourselves. In other words, there is no room for hatred and contempt in religion. Hatred is implicit in untouchability. We must do away with this hatred. Hinduism is a religion which holds service to be of the highest importance. Why should those considered untouchable be denied service?

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 16-7-1925

239. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

July 16, 1925

MY DEAR C. R.,

Somehow or other I need your letter to feel that all is well with you. My position is this. My body and mind are living in a world by which I remain unaffected, but in which I am being tried. My soul is living in a world physically away from me and yet a world by which I am and want to be affected. You are a part of that world and perhaps the nearest to me. My innermost being wants your approbation of what I am doing and thinking. I may not always succeed in getting it, but it craves for your verdict.

Now you understand exactly why I want to hear from you apart from many other reasons. You must let me have if it is only

a postcard every week. Mahadev, Devdas, Pyarelal[1] should keep you posted with what is going on.

And you must keep well.

Your *sadhana* is the development of the place where you are and a scientific test of our theory of the value of hand-spinning. Even if it proves untrue in the end, neither we nor the world will have lost anything, for I know that we are true in the sense that we have full faith in the programme and, if it is intrinsically not immoral, our theory can be claimed to be true, when a fairly large number of villages sustain hand-spinning and khadi without protection as the whole of India sustains home cookery without protection.

Surely this is a long introduction to what I want to say. Here is Pitt's letter and the letters from Kelappan. I am simply saying that we must keep nominally a satyagrahi at the Eastern gate unless the local men think otherwise. But you may come to other conclusion. You should write to Kelappan. He seems to be a nice, useful man.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

240. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

ON TOUR,
July 16, 1925

DEAR MR. PITT,

I thank you for your long and interesting letter[2]. In view of your letter, I am just now writing nothing publicly. But I fear that the posting of a satyagrahi at the point of prohibition is necessary as a matter of principle and discipline. In my opinion, an unequivocal declaration by the State is necessary. The condition of the untouchables should not be precarious. But, as before, I shall do nothing in a hurry and shall correspond with you before taking any step forward. I hope, however, that the prohibition

[1] Pyarelal Nayyar; Gandhiji's secretary, 1920-48, and biographer

[2] This is not available. Prior to it Pitt appears to have sent Gandhiji a telegram: "Am writing in detail. Please suspend judgment."

that still exists in reality will be removed very soon and without the necessity of direct action. What about the other temples?[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11098

241. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday [July 16, 1925][2]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. If you want the other bangles just now, let me know and I shall send them by post. Will Dahyabhai like to study in the National Medical College of Calcutta? It seems to be working well. Or what is Dahyabhai's real desire in the matter? I am so busy that I cannot possibly write long letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 27

242. RESOLUTIONS AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING[3]

CALCUTTA,
July 16, 1925

1. The General Council of the Swaraj Party, whilst sharing with the country the deep grief universally expressed over the sudden and premature death of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, feels that the Party has lost its founder and infallible guide who kept it from harm in the midst of difficulties and led it in Bengal from victory to victory and set to the Party a standard of courage, self-

[1] For Pitt's reply *vide* Appendix III. Earlier Pitt seems to have received a copy of a telegram which Gandhiji sent Kelappan "to picquet the Eastern gate only of Vaikom temple." But this message is not available.

[2] As in the printed source

[3] The General Council of the All-India Swarajists Party met at 148, Russa Road under the presidentship of Motilal Nehru. Gandhiji and Sarojini Naidu attended on special invitation. According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-7-1925, the second resolution was drafted by Gandhiji. Presumably the first resolution too was drafted by him.

sacrifice and discipline for which the Party owes to the memory of the deceased Chief a debt which it can never hope to repay. The Council tenders to Shrimati Basanti Devi and the family its respectful condolences.

2. The meeting of the General Council of the All-India Swaraj Party wholly endorses the sentiments regarding violence and the strong condemnation thereof contained, and the offer of honourable co-operation with the Government and the conditions thereof laid down, in the Faridpore speech, dated the 2nd day of May, 1925, of the late President of the Party, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das.

The Council, however, regrets that the recent pronouncement of the Rt. Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India in the House of Lords is not only no response to the late President's offer, but, on the contrary, is calculated by reason of its tone and language to make the chances of honourable co-operation difficult, if not impossible.

The Council, therefore, sees in that pronouncement no reason for a revision of the policy of the Swaraj Party, but will be prepared to reconsider it if the final declaration to be made by the Government of India, and referred to by Lord Birkenhead, is found to be at all adequate to meet the requirements of the existing situation in the country.

Forward, 17-7-1925

243. *SPEECH AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING*[1]

CALCUTTA,
July 16, 1925

When the business of the meeting was finished, Mahatmaji addressed the gathering with reference to the question of giving up the spinning franchise. He said that many Swarajists were present there. To them he would submit that, if they wanted to drop the spinning franchise, he would call a meeting of the A.I.C.C. for that purpose. Personally, he believed that much work had been done in regard to the spinning franchise in the course of the last six months and he expected that much would be done in course of the re-

[1] Those present included Sarojini Naidu, V. J. Patel, N. C. Kelkar, M. S. Aney, Dr. Moonje, T. Prakasam, S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Rangaswami Ayengar and J. M. Sen Gupta.

maining half year. But, still, if they wanted to drop it, he would no longer make delay in the matter.[1]

The Searchlight, 19-7-1925

244. SPEECH AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING[2]

CALCUTTA,
July 17, 1925

Mahatmaji, who was present at the meeting, declared clearly that if they wanted to abolish the said franchise he would at once accede to their demand and convene a meeting of the A.I.C.C. But for him personally the only course open would be to resign the Presidentship of the Congress Working Committee and work separately for spreading charkha and khaddar. He said that he was ready to do away with the pact with the Swarajists and thereby make them completely independent of any obligation regarding Congress mandate. The pact had made it obligatory to the Swarajists to abide by the spinning franchise for full one year and for this reason only many of them were inclined to observe it for the full term. But if the majority were for abolition, he must dissolve the pact in due deference to their wishes. In conclusion he declared that, if the Congress would abolish the spinning franchise, he would, while remaining within the Congress, form a separate organization for spinning and would work it up just as Deshbandhu Das and others formed and worked up the Swaraj Party.[3]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-7-1925

[1] On this point J. M. Sen Gupta and Motilal Nehru felt that the Swarajists must abide by the pact they had made with the Congress, and breach of it would imply breach of the Congress policy by the Swarajists who were all Congressmen.

[2] The meeting was held in the morning at the residence of S. C. Roy, son-in-law of C. R. Das, to discuss the abolition of the spinning franchise.

[3] The meeting of the A.I.C.C., it was decided, would be held late in September or early October to discuss the question of spinning franchise fully. According to the report: "At the conclusion of the sitting, Mahatmaji sent a note to Pandit Motilal Nehru saying that since the Swarajists had majority in the Congress and since Panditji was the President of the Swaraj Party, he should also assume the Presidentship of the Congress Working Committee. He did no longer like to be the President of this body. This note had created a sensation in the Swarajists' camp most of whom did not like to lose Mahatmaji's counsel. However, it was finally arranged that for at least the remaining period of this year, Mahatmaji will remain as the President of the A.I.C.C. But if the spinning franchise be dropped at the next meeting of the A.I.C.C., he will resign and set up a separate spinning organization."

245. A DECEPTIVE SPEECH

[*July 18, 1925*]

Lord Birkenhead's pronouncement is deceptive in a double sense. It does not read as harsh on second reading as it did on first, but it disappoints more on the second than it did on the first. The harshness of it is unintended. The Secretary of State could not help himself. He has spoken as he has felt or rather been coached to feel. But his promises are only apparently alluring. A closer perusal leaves one under the impression that the maker of them knows that he will never be called upon to fulfil them. Let us take the most tempting of them. It says, in effect, 'produce your constitution and we will consider it.' Is it not our thirty-five years' experience that we have made petitions that we have considered to be perfect, but that they have been rejected "after careful consideration"? Having had that experience, we dropped the beggar's bowl in 1920 and made up our minds to live by our own exertion, even though we should perish in the attempt. It is not draughtsmanship that his Lordship really asks, it is swordsmanship he invites, with the full knowledge that the invitation will not be and could not be accepted. The evidence is in the speech itself. He had before him the Minority report of the Muddiman Committee, i.e., of Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jinnah, two among the cleverest lawyers we have in India and who have never been guilty of the crime of non-co-operation, and one of whom has been Law Member of the Viceregal Council. They and their colleague have been told that they did not know their business. Has then a constitution framed by Pandit Motilal Nehru and endorsed by, say, the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri and Mian Fazli Hussain[1] a better chance of favourable reception? Is not Lord Birkenhead's offer a trap for the unwary to fall in? Supposing an honest constitution is drawn up just to meet the present situation, will it not be immediately regarded as preposterous and something infinitely less offered in its stead? When I was hardly twenty-five years old, I was taught to believe that, if we wished to be satisfied with 4 annas, we must ask for 16 annas in order to get the 4 annas. I never learnt that lesson because I believed in asking for just what I needed and fighting for it. But I have not failed

[1] A member of the Viceroy's Executive Council

to observe that there was a great deal of truth in the very practical advice.

The silliest constitution backed by force, whether violent or non-violent, will receive the promptest consideration especially from the British, who know only too well the value of at least one kind of force.

There is the Bill taken to England by that tireless servant of India, Dr. Besant. It is signed by many eminent Indians. And if some others have not signed it, it is not because they will not be satisfied with it, but because they know that nothing but the waste-paper basket is its destiny. It has not been signed because those who have refrained do not wish to be party to the insult of the nation which its summary rejection will imply. Let Lord Birkenhead say that he will accept any reasonable constitution that may be prepared by a party or parties overwhelmingly representative of Indian public opinion and he will have a constitution in a week's time. Let him publicly assure Dr. Besant that her Bill will have every chance of acceptance if it is endorsed by Pandit Motilal Nehru and others whom he may name, and I shall undertake to secure those signatures. The fact is that there is no sincere ring about the offer.

It is no fault of the Secretary of State for India that his offer does not read sincere. We are not ready as yet to demand anything. Therefore, naturally, it is for the British Government to give and for us to reject, if what is offered is not deemed enough for the time being. For us what the new Commander-in-Chief considers as unattainable is the only thing worth living for, fighting for and dying for. One's birthright is never unattainable and Lokamanya taught us that swaraj was our birthright. The definition of that swaraj is to rule ourselves, although we misrule ourselves for the time being. We, the English and the Indians, are in a hopeless muddle. Lord Birkenhead thinks the British Government are trustees for our welfare. We think that they hold us in bondage for their own benefit. Trustees never charge as their commission seventy-five per cent of the income of their wards. His Lordship says we cannot be a nation with our 9 religions and 130 languages. We contend that, for all practical purposes and for protection from outside the Indian border, we are one nation. He thinks that Non-co-operation was a dreadful mistake. The vast majority of us think that it alone awakened this sleeping nation from its torpor, it alone has given the nation a force whose strength is beyond measure. The Swaraj Party is a direct result of that force. He says that in Hindu-Mussalman dis-

sensions the British Government have "kept their hands unsullied". It is the certain belief of almost every Indian that they, the British Government, are principally responsible for most of our quarrels. He thinks that we must co-operate with them. We say that, when they mean well or when there is change of heart, they will co-operate with us. He says that no gifted leader arose to make use of the Reforms. We say that Messrs Sastri and Chintamani, not to mention others, were gifted enough to make the Reforms a success but, in spite of all the good will in the world, they found that they could not do so. Deshbandhu showed a way out. His offer stands.

But what hope is there of his offer being responded to in the spirit in which it has been made? There are the different viewpoints which make us English and Indians see things contrarywise. Is there any chance, then, of finding a common meeting ground?

Yes, there is.

We, the two peoples, occupy an unnatural position, i.e., of rulers and ruled. We Indians must cease to think that we are the ruled. That we can only do when we have some kind of force. We seemed to think we had it in 1921 and so we fancied that swaraj was coming inside of a year. Now no one dare prophesy. Let us gather that force—the non-violent force of civil resistance—and we shall be equal. This is no threat, no menace. It is a hard fact. And if I do not nowadays regularly criticize the acts of our 'rulers', as I used to before, it is not because the fire of the civil resister has died down in me, but because I am an economist of speech, pen and thought. When I am ready, I shall speak freely. I have ventured to criticize Lord Birkenhead's pronouncement to tell the bereaved people of Bengal in particular and of India in general that I feel the unintended prick of Lord Birkenhead's speech just as much as they do, and that, whilst Motilalji will be fighting in the Assembly and leading the Swaraj Party in the place of Deshbandhu, I shall be leaving no stone unturned to prepare the atmosphere needed for civil resistance—a vocation for which I seem to me to be more fitted than for any other. Has not the singer of the *Gita* said, "Better by far is the performance of one's own dharma (duty), however humble it may be, than another's, however loftier it may be?"

Young India, 23-7-1925

246. MY NOTES

Honour among Thieves

I never thought that I would have to write a note with this heading, and that too in connection with national activity in Gujarat. But the unexpected has happened. The Gujarat Khadi Mandal has resolved as under:

> As it has become difficult to collect some of the outstanding dues of the Mandal and it has become necessary to file a suit to realize them, it is resolved that a statement containing the facts about these dues should be sent to Gandhiji through the Provincial Committee and, after his reply is received, necessary steps be taken to recover the dues in question.

The resolution has been occasioned by one or two particular cases. I have got the name and address of one party, but I do not wish to publish them just now, nor do I intend to advise the Khadi Mandal to file a suit in a court. I have already stated my view on this subject, to the effect that the resolutions of the Congress were not intended to harm its own interests. When they were proposed, it was taken for granted that its members would not break their promises to one another at any rate, that they would be honest among themselves in the matter of Congress work. But I find from the papers before me that Congressmen themselves —workers trusted by the Khadi Mandal—have been refusing to return the money advanced to them by the Mandal. Some persons who offered to mediate between the parties have also failed to keep their promise. If in dealing with such persons, we follow the Congress resolution on the boycott of courts, the Congress itself will have to declare bankruptcy. Will a Gujarati refuse to follow even the code of conduct which thieves recognize? 'Honour among thieves' means the morality which thieves respect. Their thieving is, to be sure, violation of morality, but they do not thieve among themselves. If one of them lends a sum to another, the latter scrupulously returns it. Are there really Gujaratis who will not observe morality even to this extent? I would urge those who have kept back the Khadi Mandal's money to pay up, at any rate, the amounts which they have admitted as due from them.

All Unmarried

Through pride, maybe, or ignorance, or both, I thought that myself and my co-workers were the only people who tried to keep all

their sons and daughters unmarried. But my pride has been humbled and my ignorance has been dispelled. One of the volunteers attending on me is a nephew of the Secretary of the local Congress Committee. Not only is he himself unmarried, but his father wants all his brothers to remain unmarried. If the young men themselves wish to marry, he will agree to find suitable brides for them; he has no intention to force them to remain unmarried against their will. But he is, at the same time, so training his sons that they will resolve to remain unmarried. All his sons are grown-up young men and settled in some profession or other, but so far they have remained unmarried of their own free will. I observe that in Bengal even girls are being trained to remain unmarried. The number of such girls is very small, but the movement does exist; it does not owe anything to Western influence; the parents of the girls who are trying to train their daughters in this manner are inspired solely by religious motives.

Right *v.* Left

No one can say definitely why people came to make a distinction between the right hand and the left hand and how it became customary to avoid using the left hand for doing certain things and to use, instead, the right hand. But the result, as we know, is that for want of practice the left hand has become useless for many purposes and also remains weaker than the right hand.

It is not so in Japan. There people are taught to use both hands equally well from their early years. As a result, their physical efficiency is greater than ours.

I place this suggestion before the reader for his benefit in the light of my present experience. It is more than twenty years since I read about the practice in Japan. When I came to know of it, I started learning to write with my left hand and acquired tolerable proficiency in it. I now regret that I did not acquire the same speed in writing with the left hand as I had with the right, thinking that I could not afford the time required for that. Now my right hand does not give the desired service in writing. It starts paining when I have written for some time with it. Being anxious to retain as long as possible the ability to write with the right hand, I have again started using the left hand. I do not have time enough now to do all my writing with the left hand and learn to write with it as fast as with the right hand. But it has been serving me well whenever I am in difficulty; I have, therefore, placed my experience in this matter before the reader. Those who can spare the required time and are keen enough

should train themselves to write with the left hand too. Everyone who does so will discover in the course of time the value of this ability. Besides writing, it is useful to learn to do other things too with the left hand. Most of us have come across many persons who cannot even manage to eat with the left hand when the right hand has become unserviceable for some reason. I hope that this note will make no one go crazy about using the left hand. My only purpose in writing it is to advise people to keep the left hand in practice as much as they can in the ordinary course. It may be worth while for teachers to follow this suggestion and train children in this manner.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1925

247. WHEN CAN WE RISE?

A public worker writes:[1]

I have omitted here the details about Indian States given by the correspondent.

Faith cannot be a gift from anyone and, therefore, "Sevak"[2] must himself acquire or feel the faith which he wants. I can, however, explain the flaw in his thinking. What a society deserves by way of reward and punishment for its actions is determined by the sum total of its activities. Moreover, we have been using the term "swaraj" in a restricted sense. It means the transfer of the reins of government from the hands of the British rulers into our hands. In this connection, we should compare the deserts of the two [the British and the Indian people] on the basis of their social and political ethics. Social morality will include such virtues as our capacity for organization, fearlessness in social life, and so on. When our people have these virtues we shall be able to secure the reins of government in our hands. Moreover, at present swaraj means the freedom of British India only. No doubt freedom will have the profoundest effect on Indian States, but their problem will remain a separate one and will in all probability solve itself when British India has won its freedom. How-

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the evils prevalent in the country and asked how, in view of those evils, they could expect the country to prosper.

[2] Correspondent's pseudonym; literally, servant

ever evil the rule in Indian States, British India can be free today if it is strong enough. Hence, in judging what the country deserves, we should take into account the actions of the people in British India only. If we take into account the conditions in Indian States as well, our conclusion will go wrong. Really speaking, the Indian States represent British authority. They are subject to that authority, are responsible to it and yet are not. Their responsibility is limited to paying the tribute and remaining loyal to it. In regard to their relation with their subjects, they are almost independent. In any case, they are not responsible to the subjects. This makes them more susceptible to the evil influences in their environment. To put it in other words, they have many temptations to rule oppressively. If they respect justice as much as they do, it is because they still have some independent policy of their own. The wonder is that, though the Indian States are free from any control and though the British Government would welcome their following a policy of oppression, they manage to preserve the decency which they do. The credit for this goes to the ancient civilization of India.

By saying this, I am not defending the Indian States. I am only trying to assess the situation as it is and am pointing out to "Sevak" the flaw in his thinking, so as to help him to overcome his feeling of despair. However bad the Indian States may be, if the millions in the country who are directly under British rule display the social virtues which a nation must possess, they can secure control of the government. If they choose, the Indian States can help the people to cultivate those virtues. But even if they do not help, or actually obstruct our efforts, the people can acquire them.

We have often examined in the past what these requirements are—the spinning-wheel, i.e., khadi, Hindu-Muslim unity and eradication of untouchability. These things are necessary if we wish to secure swaraj through peaceful means. None of them would be required if we wished to win it with the sword. But, then, the freedom we should then win would not be the people's freedom; it would be freedom for those with strength of arms. The people would have merely exchanged one form of slavery for another: a brown-skinned Dyer would not be more acceptable than the white-skinned one was. The plight of the subjects of Indian States which "Sevak" bemoans would then be the plight of the whole country, for the body of men which would have wrested power from the British with the help of the sword would hardly regard itself as responsible to the people. *Asi*, *talwar*, *shamsher*, "sword"—all these terms denote the same thing.

At present British rule would certainly seem milder than the rule of the Indian Princes. That indeed is the beauty of British rule. The Government must please some people in order to run the administration. The middle classes, therefore, do not have to submit to perpetual injustice. Since British tyranny has a much wider field, it is felt by a few individuals to be relatively mild and, because of long familiarity, we do not even recognize it as tyranny. The slaves in the southern States in the U.S.A. had come to love their condition so much, because of their long familiarity with it that, when they were set free, some of them broke into tears. They were faced with serious problems such as where to go, what to do and how to earn their livelihood. Many of us are in a similar condition. We do not feel the subtle but nonetheless deadly tyranny of British rule. Many victims of tuberculosis, though warned by doctors about their condition are deceived by the flush on their cheeks, not knowing that it is unnatural. They do not pay attention to the paleness of their legs.

Let me warn the reader that I offer no plea for the Indian States; I am only describing the country's sad plight. The Indian States may be bad, but their badness is shielded by the British Government. On superficial examination, British rule may seem better than the rule of the Indian Princes, but in reality it is by no means so. The British system of Government ruins the people physically, mentally and spiritually. Indian Princes ruin their subjects physically for the most part. If British rule gives place to people's rule, I believe the reform of the Indian States will follow as a matter of course. If the rule of force by white British arms is replaced by similar rule by brown arms, the change will bring no benefit to the people nor reform the Indian States. Any thoughtful person will be able to convince himself or herself of the truth of these two statements.

Though the atmosphere at present is confusing, I clearly visualize progress of the spinning-wheel and khadi movement. The practice of untouchability is disappearing, and the Hindus and the Muslims are bound to return to the path of sanity, if not through reason, then, after fighting with each other. Hence, my faith that we can win swaraj remains unshaken.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1925

248. NATIONAL EDUCATION

I give below the substance of what a Gujarati friend, after first describing the present unhappy state of national education, writes:

> When students are leaving the national schools and colleges, when the workers grow slack and send their own children to Government schools for education, when the pupils who still remain wear khadi only when attending the national schools and the students who have obtained the *snataka* degree do not know what profession to take up—in these circumstances, how can we expect the national education movement to survive? I hope you will not say that the *snatakas* should go on spinning.

Every movement has its periods of ebb and flow before it succeeds in its aim. It is the same with the national education movement. Only those whose faith in it remains unshaken even during the periods of ebb will in the end bring glory to it. Having faith in the cause of national education, I am not afraid of a period of ebb but know that ebb will surely be followed by flood. Hence those who have faith should not lose it. The problem of employment for *snatakas* is a complicated one. The national education movement has not yet reached a stage when we can say that no *snataka* is in the slightest worried about employment. Some of them will be absorbed in the field of national education itself, but for the majority of them there should be something else, and the only field is that of khadi. That is the one field of national activity which throbs with life and can employ the largest number of young men. *Snatakas* in good numbers should come forward to work in it. Spinning as a means of earning one's livelihood is meant for the poorest. The work which middle-class people can take up as a means of livelihood is popularizing spinning. I see in Bengal that hundreds of young men can make a modest living through such employment. I am collecting the figures relating to this. I am sure people will be pleasantly surprised by them.

But this work is only for those young men who have faith in the power of khadi and have the necessary patience to learn the various processes connected with it. I concede that those

who have no faith in the spinning-wheel and in khadi will serve no useful purpose by hanging on to national education.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1925

249. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
July 19, 1925

DEAR PANDITJI,

During these few days I have been taxing myself what special exclusive contribution I can make to the memory of Deshbandhu and the situation created by Lord Birkenhead's speech, and I have come to the conclusion that I should absolve the Swaraj Party from all obligations under the Pact of last year. The result of this act is that the Congress need no longer be a predominantly spinning association. I recognize that, under the situation created by the speech, the authority and the influence of the Swaraj Party need to be increased. I would fail in my duty if I neglected a single step within my power to increase the strength of the Party. This can be done if the Congress becomes a predominantly political body. Under the Pact, the Congress activity is restricted to the constructive programme mentioned therein. I recognize that this restriction should not continue under the altered circumstances that face the country. Not only do I, therefore, personally absolve you from the restriction, but I propose to ask the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. to do likewise and place the whole machinery of the Congress at your disposal so as to enable you to bring before that body such political resolutions as you may consider necessary in the interest of the country. In fact, I would have you regard me at your disposal in all such matters in which I can conscientiously serve you and the Swaraj Party.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 23-7-1925

[1] For Motilal Nehru's reply, *vide* Appendix V.

250. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Monday [July 20, 1925][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Thank God that I am able to write even a postcard to you. You have imagined too many things in my assistance. I do not see the necessity of reserving you for the kind of assistance you talk of. Let everyone go to the Assembly if he likes. I would neither go myself nor send anybody there. The charkha alone is our work. If Deshbandhu had lived on, he would have done mainly this work; he was interested in the charkha so much. But all this when we meet. Just now all my time goes in collecting ten lakhs and in meeting Panditji. Hardly do I get any time to write for the weeklies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2132

251. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

July 21, 1925

DEAR RAJENDRA BABU,

I must write to you in English to save time. My right hand refuses to work. To write with the left would take much time. I am, therefore, just now taking shorthand assistance. In fact, I commenced it only today. I am afraid it will not be possible to hold the meeting of the A.I.C.C. in Patna.[2] The people from Maharashtra and Madras, and especially the latter, complain bitterly, and there is much truth in their complaint. So all fixed upon Bombay. This time we want a full meeting. Very important resolutions to be taken making changes in the constitution and policy. I would like the resolutions, whatever they are, to be taken in a full house. But if you can have me in Bihar in the beginning of September, I could come and I would like to take as little as possible for Bihar. But if you must have a whole month, you can have it. As a matter of fact, as you will be having

[1] The postmark is dated "Calcutta, July 21, 1925".

[2] The meeting came off on October 1, 1925.

me in Purulia, and as all the workers will be coming there, perhaps it would be unnecessary for you to take me to many centres at the present moment. But you shall be the sole judge. I have sent word with the messenger who came with your first note that you will find me in Purulia on the 12th. If, however, you will have me earlier, please let me know in any case. You must so arrange as to enable me to reach Bombay on 30th September. And all the members from Bihar should attend the A.I.C.C. meeting. As to the circular about the charkha, I have not yet read it, but I hope to do so in the course of a week and write about it for next week's *Young India*. Yes, all-India Memorial notice will be now out. Jawaharlal has already written about it. It will be solely devoted to the propagation of the spinning-wheel and khaddar and, though it is not stated in the appeal, naturally the monies collected in the provinces will be disbursed in those provinces so far as possible. But the operation will take place through the All-India. . . .[1]

From a microfilm: S.N. 10679

252. *AN ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL*

[On or before *July 22, 1925*][2]

We the undersigned are of opinion that an all-India fund is as much a necessity as an all-Bengal one to perpetuate the memory of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. He was as much an all-India man as he was an all-Bengal man. Just as we knew what Deshbandhu would have himself wished us to do as an all-Bengal Memorial, so do we know what he would have wished us to do regarding an all-India Memorial. His idea was clearly expressed over a year ago and repeated in his Faridpur speech that village reconstruction was the thing dearest and nearest to his heart for the regeneration of India and for the attainment of swaraj along peaceful and evolutionary lines. We know, too, that he believed that the beginning and the centre of such activity lay in the revival and development of hand-spinning in villages and universalization of khaddar. It is the one activity that can be made common to all India and yet can be handled with the least cost. It is the one activity

[1] The letter is incomplete.

[2] This joint appeal was evidently drafted and signed before July 22, when Gandhiji issued another appeal referring to this; *vide* the following item.

that is calculated to yield immediate results, be they ever so small. All people, rich and poor, young and old, men and women, can personally help and engage in it if they will. It can, as nothing else can, bind the city people to the villagers and introduce the educated class to them in a most useful manner. It is the one activity that can be common to all the provinces and all the sects of India and produce the largest economic results. Lastly, though it has a political side, it is in its nature so obviously social and economical that it should enlist the support of all, without distinction of party, who believe in the spinning-wheel as a great economic factor and as a factor in village reconstruction.

We, therefore, cannot conceive a more fitting Memorial than the universal propagation of the spinning-wheel and khaddar and, therefore, invite funds for that purpose. We refrain from naming the sum required for this Memorial as it can absorb all it can receive. The subscription given by the public will be the measure of their regard for the memory of the deceased patriot, of their belief in the usefulness of the form the Memorial is to take and of their trust in those who are to handle and operate on the funds. They will be Sjt. M. K. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ray, Shrimati Sarojini Devi, Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, with power to add to their number. Pandit Jawaharlal has consented to act as Hon. Secretary for the Trustees and Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj as Treasurer. Remittances should be sent to Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj, 395, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay, or to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, 107, Hewett Road, Allahabad. A full list of donations will be sent to the Press for publication from week to week.

M. K. GANDHI

MOTILAL NEHRU
RABINDRANATH TAGORE
A. K. AZAD
P. C. RAY
JAMNALAL BAJAJ
SAROJINI NAIDU
NIL RATAN SIRCAR
J. M. SEN GUPTA
C. F. ANDREWS
VALLABHBHAI PATEL
B. F. BHARUCHA
SHYAMSUNDAR CHAKRAVARTI
BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
SARAT CHANDRA BOSE
NALINI RANJAN SIRKAR
SATYANAND BOSE

(More signatures to follow.)

Young India, 23-7-1925

253. APPEAL FOR ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

148, Russa Road,
Calcutta,
July 22, 1925

I hope that the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial appeal will not in any way disturb the all-Bengal Deshbandhu collection. The all-India collection will last a considerable period, seeing that Bengal will have paid a heavy sum for the All-Bengal Memorial. The collection in Bengal for the All-India Memorial need not be made for three months or a longer period if necessary. The attention of Bengal should not be diverted from the all-Bengal collection. It must be a point of honour with every Bengali and everyone domiciled in Bengal to make the Bengal collection a full success. Over five lakhs have now been already paid. Though the balance, I take it, is assured, it is likely to take longer than the first five lakhs unless the workers will concentrate their effort on quickness in collection.

Sjt. Manilal Kothari has shown what can be done in the direction by specialists. In view of his success in inducing some of those who have already paid to double and even to quadruple their subscriptions, there is perhaps a possibility of some of the others, who have already subscribed, paying a second and substantial instalment. But, apart from this possibility, there are schools and colleges left untouched. Will the Principals of these institutions or the students themselves move, as I was told at the beginning of the month that they would, as soon as these institutions were open after the vacation? There are all the Bengal merchants and traders in the busy centres of Calcutta mostly untouched. I could see, when I was taken to some of these shops, that it was possible to collect, if not the whole sum, at least a large part of it from these merchants. Again, all the districts have not yet sent in their returns, nor have the Bengalis from the other provinces, except in some cases. Will all these friends respond in good time?

I would like to plead a little for myself. I had hoped to be able to leave Bengal by the middle of this month. I see no hope of doing so before the end of the month. I ask for the assistance of those who revere the memory of Deshbandhu and who are

able themselves to subscribe and induce others to do so in finishing the collection as early as possible.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 23-7-1925

254. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

CALCUTTA,
July 22, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your two letters.[1] I must not try to write myself just now. My right hand refuses to bear any strain. It insists upon rest. Hence this dictating. I had a long chat with Shuaib[2]. He thinks that he is utterly incompetent for *Comrade* work not because of his inability as editor, but because of incompatibility of temperament. He says what is the use of going there only to prove a dismal failure. Knowing Shuaib as I now do, I see considerable force in what he says. I am quite clear in my mind that, if immediate and definite assistance is not procurable, Mahomed Ali should give up both the papers or at least one. A good soldier, when he knows defeat to be a certainty, takes to an orderly retreat and does not wait for completion of the disaster or annihilation. But you know best, not he. I have the same faith in your robust common sense that I started with. You must, therefore, exercise your judgment and lay down the law for Mahomed Ali. I am following the movements of both of you as much as it is possible for me to do without reading newspapers. With us, or better still, with you, the battle has only now begun. I say 'with you' for the simple reason that I am now inured to difficulties and dangers and defeats so called. My heart and my prayers are with you.

I must still remain in Calcutta to finish the ten lakhs.[3] It is an uphill job, but it delights my heart to see the poorest of Bengal giving their pice and even their half-pice. You must have seen what I am doing and I have done regarding the Swarajists. I am trying to give them all help that I am capable of rendering, and personally I am certain that the Congress must be wholly theirs, and we who do not believe in Council-entry should remain in the Congress on their sufferance. But this time I have avoided any

1 These are not available.
2 Shuaib Qureshi
3 Target for collection of funds for the Deshbandhu Memorial

understanding. The All-India Congress Committee will be absolutely free to take any decision it likes unhampered by me or anybody else. So far as I am concerned, I am becoming more and more convinced that, when there is a wreckage of everything else, hand-spinning and khaddar will survive. It is only safe and potent constructive activities which can remain unaffected by any storm however violent. Shuaib knows, I think, the goal of my mind and so does Shankerlal[1], who was here. I must refer you to them for the balance and then to the pages of *Young India*, which is more and more becoming my weekly letter to my friends.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

From a photostat: S.N. 19339

255. *LETTER TO KRISHNADAS*

July 22, 1925

MY DEAR KRISTODAS,

I have asked Satis Babu to send one hundred rupees to Hardayal Babu. My right hand is causing some trouble. I am, therefore, dictating this.

I continue to hear about you from Satis Babu. You must become healthy and strong as early as possible. All mental worries must be put aside. I hope you are going to Comilla as early as possible. Jamnalalji is going to Atrai. He will be there a few days perhaps before he proceeds to Chandpur. Will you not go at once therefore to Comilla and recuperate yourself.

Yours sincerely,

B. KRISHNADAS
C/O RADHA MADHAB SINGHA
CHANDPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19338

[1] Shankerlal Banker

256. LETTER TO NISHITHNATH KUNDU

148 Russa Road,
Calcutta,
July 22, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I did discuss the conditions of the committee at Dinajpur with Deshbandhu. He told me that at the present moment it was difficult for the provincial committee to help a district like yours. There are no funds with the committee. What it is now possible for me to suggest is that workers who have full faith in khadi should put themselves in correspondence with Khadi Pratishthan and work under it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

From a photostat: G.N. 8021

257. THE SPINNING FRANCHISE

There was an informal meeting of the Swarajists and others on the 17th instant.[1] It was a representative gathering. All including myself felt that a revision of the franchise was necessary and all felt that the self-spinning as an alternative should be permanently retained, and not merely by way of trial, in the Congress franchise. That means permanent recognition of the right of labour to be directly represented in the Congress. All agreed that yarn as distinguished from spinning franchise must be abolished. It had given rise to hypocrisy and even dishonesty. The question of quantity of self-spun yarn or cash subscription was held in abeyance. There was a divergence of opinion. An overwhelming majority favoured also the retention of khaddar-wearing as a permanent part of the franchise. This is, in my opinion, a decided gain. The third proposition unanimously agreed to was that an All-India Spinners' Association should be formed to be an integral part of the Congress, with absolute powers, which would control the spinning part of the Congress activity and act as the Congress Agency for receiving and testing spinning subscriptions. The result,

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Swaraj Party Meeting", 17-7-1925.

if the recommendations are accepted, would be that the Swarajists will 'run' the Congress and the A.I.S.A. will take the place analogous to the Swaraj Party.

The A.I.C.C. will meet on the 1st of October to consider the proposal. It will meet without any restriction on the freedom of the members. Not even those who were present at the informal meeting will be bound by the vote they gave at it. If, on further consideration, they think differently, they will be free to vote against the proposals that will be submitted to the meeting. The members of the A.I.C.C. will be free also to move amendments and criticize as they please. Each one will vote as a Congressman or, better still, as an Indian without any party obligation. As the reader will observe from my letter to Panditji,[1] I have as a matter of duty absolved the Swaraj Party from any obligation under last year's Pact. The propositions to be submitted to the A.I.C.C. must be examined on merits. I do not desire that any member, Swarajist or No-changer, should vote to placate me. We are trying to evolve a democratic constitution. It is one's conscience alone which needs placating and no person, however great he may be. For me there are no No-changers and Pro-changers. Those who advocate Council-entry and those who do not equally serve the nation if their action or inaction is prompted by love of the country. Indeed, I urge those who have no absolute scruples against Council-entry immediately to join the Swaraj Party and strengthen its hands.

I hope that every member of the A.I.C.C. will attend the forthcoming meeting, take part in the proceedings and register his opinion. Personally I do not want the matter to be decided by a majority of votes. Whatever is done must be done by almost absolute unanimity.

What is proposed is a vital change in the constitution. Ordinarily the A.I.C.C. should not interfere with it. But there are moments when it will be disloyal not to do so. If the overwhelming opinion in the country requires a change that admits of no delay, it is the most proper thing for the A.I.C.C. to make the change and take the consequences of having its decision revoked and its action censured by the Congress. An agent has always the right to anticipate the unexpressed wishes of his principal when he acts in the latter's interest and at his own peril. I have, therefore, no hesitation in saying that, if an overwhelming majority of the members of the A.I.C.C. desire the change above foreshadowed, it would be wrong on their part by hesitation to waste

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-7-1925.

precious three months of the nation. The Cawnpore Congress should be relieved of the necessity of a prolonged discussion over a matter which could well be decided by the A.I.C.C. Its time should be left free for tackling larger problems.

Let it be also noted that the Congress will, under the scheme sketched by me, become a predominantly political body, taking the adjective in its generally accepted sense. Swarajists will become, as they ought to be, the Congress, instead of being its chief and only political agents. That is the least answer that the A.I.-C.C. can make to Lord Birkenhead.

Young India, 23-7-1925

258. FRUIT OF SUPPRESSION

An esteemed American friend sends me the following illuminating passage from Dr. Miller's *Races, Nations and Classes*:

> Within a suppressed group there grow up many bitter factions. This has become notorious among the Irish. The dissension within all the suppressed nationalities is an illustration of the same thing. Each has focussed on its own struggle for freedom and selected particular outlet for the struggle, and when these factions find it necessary to work together to accomplish a common end, there is the immediate tendency to call attention to the differences, which, though subsidiary, are considered of prime importance. Under the conditions of freedom, both for the individual and the group, this particular aspect of the psychosis will gradually wear off, but it must be accepted as an inevitable consequence of restricted freedom.

The friend observes, "This illuminates the situation in India. Doesn't it?" It does, indeed, and it is for that reason that people like Dr. Besant persevere in their attempt to secure freedom in spite of the communal dissensions. There is room for both—those who seek freedom despite differences and those who seek to remove differences for the sake of paving the road to freedom.

Young India, 23-7-1925

259. *NOTES*

'Alwar Atrocities'

What has been known as "Alwar atrocities" came before the Congress Working Committee that met in Calcutta, in the form of a motion by Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj for the appointment of a committee of inquiry. Now it has been long a tradition of the Congress not to interfere in the internal affairs of Indian States. The members of the Committee felt that it was a healthy tradition which it would be unwise to break. Sjt. Jamnalalji then did not press his motion. I told him, however, that I should discuss the question in these pages and give my reasons for my personal opinion that the Congress should not interfere in the internal administration of the Indian States. This may, if one chooses to put it so, be regarded as a virtue of necessity or a matter of policy. It is both and perhaps a little more. It must be frankly admitted that the Congress possesses no authority for enforcing its will in Indian States even to the extent it does in British India proper. Prudence, therefore, dictates inaction where action would be waste of effort, if not folly. But if inaction is prudential, it is also benevolent. The Congress seeks not to embarrass the States, it desires to help them. It does not wish to destroy them, it wishes to reform them. And this the Congress for the moment does by abstention as an earnest of its goodwill.

But abstention by the Congress does not mean absence of effort on the part of Congressmen. Those who have any relation with the States will no doubt use their influence. The local committes can help and guide the distressed people so long as they do not come in clash with authority. Nor does the Congress regulate or control the action of individual Congressmen. But when they take action, they do so not as Congressmen. The position of the Congress must not be compromised.

May the subjects of Indian States then expect no relief from the Congress which claims to be a national institution? I fear the answer must be partly in the negative. They may not expect any direct assistance. But indirect assistance they do get. For, to the measure that the Congress becomes powerful and efficient, to that measure also is levelled up the condition of the subjects of the Indian States. The moral pressure of the Congress must be felt all over the land either directly or indirectly. I hope, therefore, the

afflicted people will realize that, if the Congress does not offer any direct help, it is not for want of will, but it is entirely due to want of ability and opportunity.

For Anglo-Indians

Dr. Moreno has handed me the following questions for answers:[1]

> 1. The present distress of the Anglo-Indians is deplorable and is becoming more acute as the days go on. The unemployed themselves do not desire charity, they want work. In my mind, industrial occupations would suit them best. What is your suggestion?

I am glad the unemployed do not desire charity. I must be pardoned for saying that the unemployed can find industrial occupation in hand-weaving. But I am free to confess that the Anglo-Indian with his present training may be ill-fitted for weaving unless he is gifted with an exceptionally strong will. It is difficult to give advice on a hypothetical question. It is for an enterprising and philanthropic Anglo-Indian to prepare a census of the unemployed and then think out occupations for which the community is best fitted and prepare for training them therein.

> 2. To bring such a community, as the Anglo-Indians go to form, to your way of thinking as regards spinning and khaddar would require an active propaganda spread over a considerable length of time. Would it meet your wishes if the Anglo-Indians showed a mind not inimical to the programme you have set out?

I agree that the Anglo-Indians as a class may take time before they grow to like spinning even as a sacrament; but there is no reason to delay over the use of khaddar. A jacket made of khaddar is as serviceable as the one made of foreign cloth and bed-sheets of khaddar are better to the touch than the ordinary mill manufacture. It is the feeling of kinship with the masses that is needed to induce Anglo-Indians to use khaddar. That is, in my opinion, the first step to a real spirit of nationalism.

> 3. The Anglo-Indian community goes to form one of the minorities of India. How would your programme go to include them in your all-party combination?

The Anglo-Indians will be treated precisely in the same manner as the other minorities.

> 4. In your desire to secure a Unity Congress for the future in India, how would you include Anglo-Indian representatives, bearing in mind (a) your spinning franchise and (b) the non-inclusion of Anglo-Indian representatives hitherto in the Congress?

[1] *Vide* also "Interview to Dr. H. W. B. Moreno", 31-5-1925.

Under the proposed change, a cash subscription will be accepted in lieu of yarn. If hitherto Anglo-Indians have not joined, it is largely due to their unwillingness. If it is suggested that the Congress should have made a special effort to enlist their support, I can only say that it is difficult in respect of those who regard themselves superiors and strangers to Indians, as I fear Anglo-Indians have hitherto done.

> 5. You are aware that there is in the Anglo-Indian community a desire among some to lean on the European side, and among others to go to the Indian side. What would you advise the Anglo-Indian community as a whole to do (a) for their own benefit and (b) for the benefit of India?

I know the existence of the painful attitude. The only dignified attitude, in my opinion, is for Anglo-Indians to throw in their lot with those in whose midst they are born and among whom they have to "live and move and have their being". Their fruitless attempt to hang on to the coat-tails of Englishmen only retards their settling down to a permanent and progressive condition. To aspire to be European is unnatural. To return to their Indian parentage and surroundings is the most natural and dignified condition for them. And the doing of that which is natural and dignified must benefit both them and India, their motherland, in every sense of the word.

Preventible Waste

It was an ennobling sight, the meeting of ladies at Rajshahi. Like their sisters in the University Institute, they poured in their rupees and their ornaments. They have, indeed, done so everywhere. But at Rajshahi it was a never-ending flow. They had also a grand spinning competition in which over two hundred ladies must have taken part. One of them was an accomplished spinner of fine yarn, possibly finer even than that of Aparna Devi who only the other day came first-class first. She showed on her own person a sari of exceedingly fine yarn which she said she had spun herself. But almost every one of the wheels, including this lady's, was a useless noise-making toy, yielding poor results in quantity. The maker of these wheels, Babu Taraknath Maitra, is an enthusiast. But he is a blind enthusiast. He knows something of mechanism, but knows nothing of spinning-wheels. I do not think he knows even the principles of spinning. I must plead with him to desist from inflicting his machines on these cultured and patriotic sisters of Rajshahi. If he makes these wheels for profit, let him withdraw them and make proper wheels. If he makes them from

love of service, let him destroy the useless things, study the science of the wheel and not make another till he has acquainted himself with the best wheel. I have known in Bengal only three patterns which can at all be claimed to be good wheels. Of these three, the Khadi Pratishthan pattern has appealed to me as the best. The second is what is used by the workers at Duadando. Its speciality is that the spindle is kept slanting. A third is the old Bengal pattern with a short platform and a heavy revolving wheel and a long spindle. The tests of a good wheel are: (1) noiselessness, and (2) yield of at least 400 yards of yarn of ten counts per hour by an ordinary spinner. I have heard that the other two patterns have been known to yield 600 yards of at least ten counts per hour. I have seen the Khadi Pratishthan wheel yield over 850 yards per hour. All its workers can spin 400 yards per hour on the Khadi Pratishthan pattern. Let the manufacturers of wheels know that they are injuring the cause when they put on the market a noisy charkha that will not yield the average quantity. I warn the workers, too, against putting below-standard wheels in the hands of spinners, professional or voluntary, when they know that they can get wheels that answer the standard that I have laid down. If any man in Bengal has a better wheel, let him send it on to me. I promise to test it and report the result without undue delay. Spinning is a matter of life and death for the masses. Let not those who are engaged in spreading it indulge in waste that a little knowledge can easily prevent.

Young India, 23-7-1925

260. SPEECH AT MARWARI AGRAWAL CONFERENCE, CALCUTTA

[Before *July 24, 1925*]

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am grateful to you for inviting me to this conference and asking me to speak. I have gone through the booklet containing the resolutions to be taken up today. The question of remarriage of widows has been raised and, from the allusions made to me, I understand that you expect me to say something about it. I shall, however, prefer not to say anything now on the matter. I have said what I had to say in *Navajivan* and *Young India*, and those who wish to know my views on this question should look for them in these journals. In this way your time will be saved and you can satisfy yourself on the point.

What I wish to say to you today about the numerous reforms that the Hindu society needs will be of a general nature. I shall merely enunciate a principle. With many of you I am closely acquainted. What I feel on the question of remarriage of widows I have said in the columns of *Navajivan* and *Young India.* What I should like to make very clear here is that, though a reformer, I accept nothing against dharma.

I am convinced that I am not a Westernized reformer. There are critics who say that I am an apologist of the Western ways. I consider them childish. For they have not understood my views, nor by living with me understood my life. If I once accept something, as a satyagrahi I stubbornly cling to it. Satyagraha here does not mean what it is commonly understood to mean. Satyagraha, in its correct meaning, is holding on to truth. I openly proclaim any Western ideas that I wish to propagate. For instance, with reference to *Ayurveda* I said once that, in the matter of health, we have far less to teach the West than we have to learn from it.

I consider myself a *sanatani* Hindu. It increases our anguish when we have to suffer at the hands of outsiders. I have repeatedly said that I accept the system of *Varnashrama.* But I wish to cleanse it of the caste distinctions that have crept into it. It is my belief that Hinduism is non-violent.

Please sheathe the sword of ostracism. This is not the time for it. If a man marries off his very young daughter, you at once apply ostracism against him, but, if a man is a libertine and eats flesh, you do nothing to ostracize him. Practice of ostracism in this manner will ultimately lead to the ostracized becoming a separate caste and to an increase of discord in the community. Thus, when I went to England in 1887, I found on my return that, while some of my caste accepted me, some others ostracized me. I, however, have no grievance against my caste on that account. My policy is one of non-violence. I have no desire to cause them pain. I eat with untouchables. I also eat with Muslims. There has been no protest from my caste over this. They do not invite me to communal meals, but they invite my people. We should not condemn anyone for his being a reformer. We should not ostracize him. If you want to unite the Hindus, do not exaggerate small things nor make light of big things. Now when castes have become so hybridized and immorality is so widespread, when we are not able even to guard our own honour, whom can we ostracize? The better course would be to ostracize ourselves; that is the way of self-purification. Yes, I must tell you not to misuse the weapon of ostracism.

I am happy that, among the Hindus, the Marwari community enjoys affluence. I know also that it knows how to make money and that it does so. I am not unaware either that your community is well-known for its generosity. The Marwaris know equally well the art of making money and of spending it. I know all this well enough. But, with all this, they have a failing, and that failing is very marked: they waste money. The Marwaris, it is true, earn money and also spend it on good works; it is usually their desire to have some religious cause to support. But generally they do not spend their money properly. I would, therefore, say to the Marwaris that they should keep certain things in mind when they spend money, thinking they are putting it to a good use. It is necessary to give great thought to the question of spending money. You should make quite sure, before you spend money, that you are making good use of it. Since you are charitable and generous, it is all the more necessary for you to be thoughtful in spending. You must be aware that in America there are millionaires and multi-millionaires who are far richer than you. There used to be a millionaire called Carnegie there (I do not know whether he is alive now). It was his peculiarity that he would be guided in his actions entirely by his own ideas. He paid absolutely no attention to the ideas of others. One day it occurred to him to spend his money for some good cause. And lo and behold — he started shipping his wealth to Scotland. He did it to support libraries in Scotland. The teachers of Scotland, however, wrote him a letter requesting him to spare Scotland his charitable attentions. So we must be very careful how we disburse money. We must think hard before we undertake anything. You have necessarily to exercise care and discretion while spending money. You must understand that, unless you do so, you will not be making the right use of your money. Therefore, for a community so generous as yours care and discretion are of great importance.

I have fallen in love with the Parsi community. I should like to state here that the Parsis occupy the first place in generosity. The Jews come next. And I feel sad to say that the third place is that of the Marwaris among Hindus. I have myself seen how generous Parsis are and what great care they exercise in spending even the smallest sum. I shall, therefore, say here no more than that you Marwaris should show that among Hindus, too, there is at least one community that knows both how to earn money and how to spend it.

My views about cow-protection are well known. I have repeatedly stated that it is a very noble work. But I cannot help

saying also that it needs to be improved. I myself dabbled in it, but I did not get any great response. I have a fair amount of experience of this work. I have been at it for some thirty years. I have also done some *tapasya*. As for the response from people, I once requested a Marwari friend to accept the treasurership of a cow-protection fund, but he refused, although my intention in making him the treasurer was not to ask him for any excessive financial assistance. All the same, I must emphatically assert that, if the Marwari community cannot take up this work of cow-protection, if it cannot save the cow, I do not see which other community can. In other words, if Marwaris cannot save the cow, then no one among the Hindus can. But, for cow-protection a number of things are needed. It needs application and time quite as much as money. So, when considering this question, we must keep in mind these three requirements as well as other things. Then alone can we make any satisfactory progress in this work.

In the end, I must express my gratitude to all of you for giving me a calm and patient hearing. I pray to God that He may bestow his grace on you.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 24-7-1925

261. LETTER TO MADELEINE SLADE[1]

148 RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA
July 24, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your letter[2] which has touched me deeply. The samples of wool you have sent are excellent.

You are welcome whenever you choose to come. If I have advice of the steamer that brings you, there will be someone receiving you at the steamer, and guiding you to the train that will take you to Sabarmati. Only please remember that the life at the Ashram is not all rosy. It is strenuous. Bodily labour is given by every inmate. The climate of this country is also not a small

[1] b. 1892; Gandhiji gave her the name Mirabehn; joined Gandhiji's Ashram in November 1925; accompanied Gandhiji to London for Round Table Conference in 1931; suffered several terms of imprisonment during India's struggle for freedom.

[2] For the text of the letter, *vide* Appendix VI.

consideration. I mention these things not to frighten you, but merely to warn you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

As my right hand requires rest, I am dictating my correspondence.

From the original: C.W. 5182. Courtesy: Mirabehn

262. *LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA*

148 RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 24, 1925

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

I like your letter[1] for its fullness and frankness and for your determination to keep as healthy as it is possible for you to do.

My own position is clear. The Congress has appointed the Swarajist Party its agents for conducting the political campaign; therefore, every individual Congressman can say that the Swarajist Party is its agent for the political work. When he finds that he cannot endorse the sum total of the Swarajist activity, he can secede from the Congress or he can resist in the Congress. My own individual position is neither the one nor the other. If I must have any political representative on behalf of the Congress in the Councils, I can only appoint the Swarajist Party because of its fighting capacity and this I can say in spite of my being against Council-entry on principle. As an Indian I have to make a choice between thieves and the police, and though both are alike unacceptable to me as a believer in ahimsa, I cannot divest myself of responsibility as a social bein[g] and, therefore, must continually make my choice. It is because of this difficulty that our sages have made room for the cave-dwellers who do not want to share the responsibility for the actions of their fellow-men. They not only shun the haunts of men, but refuse to eat the corn grown by human labour. They only eat the fruits and root[s] which grow without human agency. I do not consider myse[lf] fit for that state. I remain in human society and, therefore, consistently with my individual views make myself responsible,

[1] This is not available.

where it is inevitable, for many acts which I cannot otherwise approve. Similarly, I have not yet bee[n] brought to the pitch of saying I do not want to [be] in the Congress. The agency of the Swarajist Party is strictly limited in its scope. I recognize its agency so far as the general political work is concerned. I do not make myself responsible for the character or the conduct of individual Swarajists. I wonder if I have made myself intelligible. You know the further step I have taken in view of Lord Birkenhead's speech and, of course, Deshbandhu's death. I must no longer prevent the Congress from becoming a predominantly political body by the force of my person; hence the letter to Punditji. But my decision need not affect that of a single Congressman unless it commends itself to his reason. I have simply stated my own personal opinion and, as I do not consider it to be binding on anybody in any shape or form and as I though[t] that an announcement of that character at the present moment would strengthen the Swarajist Party, I wrote the letter without any hesitation. For yourself, you know the local circumstances, and if you find that your indirect endorsement of the Swarajist Party will be to me your endorsement of the views and character of individual Swarajists, you will not hesitate to sever your connection with the Congress, while still retaining the resolute determination not to say anything against the Swarajist Party. More from the pages of *Young India*.

I expect you to be in Bombay on the 1st October; meanwhile, by all means write whatever you feel. My right hand requires rest; hence, for the last three days I am falling back upon shorthand assistance.

From a photostat: S. N. 19340

263. *SPEECH ON KRISTODAS PAL*[1]

July 24, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I want to tender a double apology to you first because I have not arrived in time, but you know the difficulties that beset me at the present moment. I have not a minute that I can call my own. Hence the delay. I want to apologize to you also for inter-

[1] A meeting to pay tribute to the memory of Kristodas Pal was held on his 41st death anniversary at the University Institute, Calcutta.

rupting the proceedings and my apologies are due to Mr. Wordsworth whose speech has been suspended in order to make room for me. I am deeply grateful for these facilities which everywhere my countrymen and others afford to me, realizing as they do my situation.

I must confess to you that I know very little of the life of Kristodas Pal. The best years of my life have been spent outside India and, as a busy man that I was in South Africa, I was not able to keep myself in touch with all that was going on in India. It is a humiliating confession, but I must make that confession to you. At the same time, I feel honoured in that I was invited to be present at this function. It is a matter of privilege to me that I can associate myself with you in the tributes that will be paid, this evening, to the memory of that great and illustrious countryman of ours. His grandson has been kind enough to place at my disposal some literature dealing with his writings and, during the spare moments I could get yesterday, I came upon a passage in one of his writings bearing upon Home Rule. I little thought that, even in his bad time, that great man thought out things which we are today endeavouring to the best of our ability to reduce to practice. He gave us those ideas of freedom which we are today endeavouring to translate into action. I have read also something else from his writings. As a youth I knew this much that he was one of the greatest journalists of his time, that he was a fearless patriot, but with his fearlessness he combined a polished and cultured courtesy which never left in anything that he wrote a sting behind. We of the present generation, in our attempt to attain our freedom, need to treasure the lesson that we have inherited from that great man; we need also to copy his fearlessness and gentleness, because fearlessness without gentleness is mere brag and bluster.

The young men who have gathered together to do honour to the memory of that great patriot should remember this one lesson from his life that, even at his time of day, he has lost nothing for having been courteous. On the contrary, we are enabled to treasure his memory because he never lost sight of the fact that a man, who has to deal with opponents, and who has to wring freedom from unwilling hands, has still need to be gentle and courteous. May I translate it in my own language and say that fearlessness is only true when combined with it is non-violence. I have summed up all these gentle virtues in that one word which we have inherited from the *rishis* of old. If it be true that our religion, Hinduism, is saturated with ahimsa, then, in every walk

of life, it is the one thing that we must exhibit most prominently.

Speakers who will follow me, from their greater acquaintance of his life, I have no doubt, will tell you many things of his other virtues. But, in my humble opinion, they will not be able to pick out a single one of his characteristics which will excel the one thing I have the honour to present to you for your acceptance and treasuring. It is well that we have gathered here together to do honour to the memory of that great man, but it will be better if we translate some part of those virtues into our own life.

May God help you and help me to do so that we may become better and fitter instruments for the task that lies before us.

Forward, 25-7-1925

264. *SPEECH AT EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION MEETING*[1]

CALCUTTA,
July 24, 1925

Mahamta Gandhi then addressed the meeting.

He apologized for not standing up to do so, and explained the cause—a severe attack of dysentery some 5 or 6 years ago, which had incapacitated him physically. He thanked the European Association for extending such an invitation to him. Mahatma Gandhi said:

I am dying to co-operate.[2]

He went on to say that he was glad whenever he got an opportunity of meeting Europeans anywhere or on any pretext, and that as a non-combatant, he was never afraid of getting hurt.

You are at liberty to ask whatever you like and to say whatever you like and I will take it with good grace. The destinies of England and India have been thrown together and have been thrown together for a good purpose, namely, the service of humanity, and I personally never miss the opportunity of understanding the European viewpoint. It is in that mood that I approach you this evening and ask you to reciprocate. I expect Englishmen to make the advance to Indians and not Indians to Europeans.

[1] Held at the Grand Hotel; the meeting was presided over by W. W. Page, after whose introductory remarks Gandhiji addressed the gathering.

[2] According to the report in *The Englishman*, 25-7-1925, Gandhiji said that "some time ago an English friend wrote to him that although he proposed to be a non-co-operator, he (Mr. Gandhi) was dying to co-operate. He wrote back that his English friend was right."

Mahatma Gandhi said he frankly confessed that the subject proposed to him was not very attractive, chiefly because it was not of so much importance as many other subjects—the subject, "Why did I intervene in the election of the Mayor of Calcutta?"[1] Mahatmaji said he had heard that his action was resented both by Europeans and Indians. But the intervention was not of his seeking. He said:

Why did I support Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's nomination and not that of somebody else? As you know, for some months past I have been saying that the Swarajists hold my general power of attorney so far as the politics of India are concerned. I have found them capable of sacrifice, lovers of their country, but not haters of Englishmen. I have thrown in my lot with the Swarajists. I have studied your (European) history. I have seen some of your institutions grow, those in South Africa, for instance, under my very gaze. The Swarajists are today the most powerful political party in India. Not because we do not know, but because we do not care to know is why Europeans and Indians find themselves so far apart.

One of the greatest friends of Englishmen has gone from us. The throne is left vacant. His followers do not possess his magic. They are unequal to shoulder his burden.

This was how Mahatmaji referred to the late Mr. C. R. Das.

Mahatma Gandhi then said that his first impression was that the Mayor of Calcutta should be a Mussalman and asked the gathering to remember how interested he was on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity.[2]

If you have got an honest and able Mohammedan, of which two facts you shall be the sole judges, and if he can serve the Corporation with a single-minded purpose, then, it shall be my duty to recommend him for the chair.

The very next day, however, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a Mohammedan leader, came and told him that there was no Mohammedan fit for the office and asked him to recommend Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta. Now Maulana Abul Kalam Azad did not belong to the Corporation or to the Swaraj Party, but was one of the most capable Mohammedans in India. He asked the Maulana why he wanted Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, and the latter replied, "Do you want the Swaraj Party to hold together?"

Mahatma Gandhi said he had had the honour of meeting Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta in Chittagong. Mr. Sen Gupta had made a mark in the Legis-

[1] *Vide* "Calcutta's Mayor", 16-7-1925.

[2] The two paragraphs which follow are taken from a report in *The Englishman*, 25-7-1925.

lative Council, he was leader of the Bengal Swaraj Party and President of the Provincial Congress Committee. Mahatma Gandhi said he must confess that he thought Mr. Sen Gupta could carry a triple burden on his shoulders if he had able lieutenants. And if Mr. Sen Gupta could do justice to the Mayoral chair and serve Calcutta's citizens consistently, then Mr. Sen Gupta was the man for the job.

I think I have given you the whole reason why I put forward Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's name for the Mayor's chair. I knew of some objections that have been raised in the Press. I want to put before you with candour and truth what it was that guided me. If you think Mr. Sen Gupta has gone to the Corporation as Mayor to advance his own interest or those of his party, it is not so. I assure you that you are mistaken. I have heard the expression "Tammany Hall" applied. Dismiss it from your minds. I should be the first to renounce such methods. The only methods that my country can rise through are methods which are above board. If I have thrown my lot into the affairs of Calcutta, I have done so in order to serve you. I have examined this question from every point of view. Mr. Sen Gupta has got the ability to fill the Mayoral chair, and I would have been unjust if I did not advocate that, if there was nothing against Mr. Sen Gupta, then he should be elected Mayor of Calcutta.[1]

He said he did not like Sir Hubert Carr's expression "political jobbery" because it was current coin in the world's politics.[2] An objection had been raised that Mr. Sen Gupta was a perfect stranger to Calcutta. Mr. Gandhi said he did not know this before. Mr. Sen Gupta was educated in Calcutta and had spent the best part of his life in that city.

I would lay down the principle that all other things being equal, a political party has the right to elect whomsoever they consider to be the best man.[3]

[1] Sir Hubert Carr, Harry Hobbs and some other members who spoke criticized Sen Gupta's election to the Mayoralty. Gandhiji replied to them in brief.

[2] *The Englishman*, 25-7-1925, reported Gandhiji as saying here: " . . . if this was political jobbery, then this had been going on throughout the world on the most extensive scale and, seeing that it had been current coin in the political world such a long time, it would be better to call it by a less bad name."

[3] *The Englishman* report here has: "Further, that political party would be doing violence to itself if it did not seize the opportunity to better its position so long as that interest was not in conflict with the best interest of the Corporation. . . . He asked them to put aside Sir Hubert Carr's proposition that this was political jobbery, because Government itself had resorted to political jobbery."

Mahatma Gandhi reminded his audience that Mr. Sen Gupta had promised that he was not going to make use of his political views while occupying the Mayoral chair, and asked who was better for the post than a trained lawyer. Mahatma Gandhi wound up by referring to the late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, who was chairman of the Bombay Corporation as well as the leader of his political party.

No one has run the Bombay Municipality with such distinction. The Swaraj Party has done no violence to any principle followed in India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-7-1925

265. *MY DUTY*

In all this universe, God alone is changeless and ever the same. Everything else rises for a time and then declines. An organization which does not change when circumstances demand is nearing its death. The Congress is still young; it aspires to grow to a far greater height still and, therefore, it will continue to change. The defects in its constitution which experience has revealed ought to be remedied.

Moreover, the passing away of Deshbandhu and lord Birkenhead's speech have created a situation in which it is necessary that any changes which seem desirable are made without delay.

I have been observing since the Belgaum session[1] that there is an unceasing demand for a change in the franchise clause.[2] I also notice that the educated class is dissatisfied with my method of work. Many of them wish that the various Congress committees should interest themselves in what are known as political matters, i.e., matters connected with work in legislatures.

I do not wish to stand in the way of either of these demands. This does not mean that I myself want these changes. But I appreciate popular opinion, believe in its importance and respect it. When that opinion seems unacceptable to me, I believe it my duty to oppose it at my cost—not at the cost of people's interests. In this case, I have no ground for opposing it. Popular opinion with the Congress means the opinion of the educated class. The Congress is the creation of this class. It, which means the educated class, has rendered many services to the country. I cannot forget these merely because of

[1] Held in December 1924, under the presidentship of Gandhiji

[2] Which made spinning, instead of a small subscription, a qualification for Congress membership

my differences with that class. As I look at the matter, I must carry the educated class with me in my attempt to convert the Congress into a mass organization. We cannot be true representatives of the masses so long as we do not do physical work to qualify ourselves for membership of the Congress. But I have not been able to convince the educated class of this. A few individuals have understood it, but the class as a whole has not responded. I must have patience and make it as easy as possible for the educated class to join the Congress. While Deshbandhu lived, my responsibility in this matter was, I felt, not so heavy. He and Motilalji served as a link between the educated class and me. With the passing away of one of them, I see that it has become my clear duty to understand the predicament of Motilalji. I see that educated people feel it as a burden even to buy hand-spun yarn and offer it as a subscription, for they lack faith in spinning. The result has been that the work of the Congress suffers from hypocrisy and insincerity. One and the same bundle of yarn has sometimes done duty for several numbers. The danger of such abuse had been pointed out to me even at Belgaum, but I had made light of it. I thought that everyone would obey the rule and, in any case, no one would practise deception. My reasoning has been proved wrong. I think, therefore, that the rule about buying yarn and giving it must be dropped. Panditji and other Swarajists felt that, in view of the pact[1] between them and me, they could not ask me to agree to the repeal of the rule even though they wanted it to be repealed. Hence I decided that I should free them from their feeling of being bound, but that I myself should not endorse the change which they desire. I have already written to him to this effect.

As far as I understand, all Swarajists want the revival of the old practice of paying money instead of buying yarn and giving it. It seemed to be their unanimous view that those who preferred to give their labour to the people should have a permanent place in the Congress. I was very happy indeed about this. I welcome this measure of tolerance. This decision means that spinning will always have a place in the Congress programme. It remains to be seen how many people with faith in spinning we get. If the All-India Congress Committee[2] adopts this change, we shall know who are sincere about spinning.

The second requirement of the franchise clause is the obligation to wear khadi. A majority of the Swarajists do not want this

[1] The Gandhi-Nehru-Das pact finally ratified at the Belgaum session
[2] Which was to meet at Patna in September

rule to be repealed. If the educated class sincerely allows this condition to stand, I would regard it as the greatest good fortune of the country. It is desirable that the change which is made now should be made and the conditions which are retained should be retained not as experimental measures but as permanent features and because members want them.

The third issue is about the Swaraj Party getting the leadership of the Congress instead of remaining its representative or an intermediary [between the Congress and the Government]. I think that, in the situation which faces us, it is not proper to continue a kind of boycott of the Swarajist movement in the Congress. It seems desirable, instead, that the particular work of the Swarajists should become the main activity of the Congress and that spinning and propagation of khadi should be carried on through people who function as intermediaries [between the Congress and the people]. The spinning-wheel movement does not need the prestige of the Congress name as much as the Swarajists need it. The former depends for its success entirely on constructive work, whereas the success of the latter's activities depends on cultivation of public opinion. I, therefore, intend to propose at the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee that it should accord the Swaraj Party the dominant place and set up a separate body to promote spinning, make this body a part of the Congress and entrust it with the responsibility of carrying on the movement. If this is done, it will also make the propagation of khadi easier in a way, and the body set up to promote spinning, not being dependent on votes, will also be free from the uncertainty resulting from changes in public opinion. Once a public opinion in favour of spinning has come into existence, the spread of the movement depends wholly on money and management, that is, on business ability. Hence the body to be set up should be the business wing of the Congress. The leaders assembled[1] in Calcutta seemed to be in favour of this too.

My duty is as clear to me as daylight. I should help the Swaraj Party to the best of my ability and within the limits of my principles, should not oppose political work becoming the principal activity of the Congress and advise the All-India Congress Committee to amend the franchise clause so as to permit members to pay money instead of their being required to buy yarn and give it. This is also the duty, it seems to me, of others in A.I.-C.C. who are, like me, No-changers. There is, however, no in-

[1] For the meeting of the Congress Working Committee and of the Swaraj Party held on July 16 and 17, 1925

tention to present a formal compact to the forthcoming A.I.C.C. Every member may exercise his freedom I have not bound anyone in any way. I have freed the Swaraj Party from its obligation[1] and, therefore, both the Swarajists and the No-changers will be able to vote according to their inclination, and I want them do so.

One issue remains to be examined. Can the A.I.C.C., a body with powers delegated by the Congress, amend a rule laid down by the latter? Ordinarily, it cannot do so, but in extraordinary circumstances and in the interest of the Congress itself, it certainly can. A person holding a power of attorney from someone, or an agent, has no authority at all to exceed the limits prescribed by his employer. But he can venture a great deal at his own risk and in the interest of the latter. The risk he will run is that the employer may revoke the power of attorney. If any loss results from the agent acting at his own risk, he is bound to bear it, since no agent can, without his employer's permission, do anything which might put the latter to loss. In short, the employer is entitled to receive the benefit of anything done by the agent in excess of his authority, but has no obligation to bear the loss. According to this principle, if the A.I.C.C., at its own risk, makes any changes without specific authority, it will run two risks: one of them is the possibility of the Congress condemning its action as improper; the other is, if the A.I.C.C., when faced with a difficult situation, does not disregard the constitution and take necessary action to meet it, it will have proved its timidity and incompetence.

But, then, such changes are generally made only when they are approved almost unanimously. When a fairly good number of members oppose them, it will be improper to adopt them, besides being unconstitutional.

Members should do nothing under the influence of my suggestion or recommendation. The A.I.C.C. may unanimously make any changes it thinks best in the interest of the Congress, that is, of the people. I wish that no member attends as a Swarajist or a No-changer. Everyone should attend as a Congressman, or, better still, as an Indian. I hope that all the members will attend this important meeting. I have never troubled members of the A.I.C.C. unnecessarily; I trouble them in the present crisis because I am helpless.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 26-7-1925

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-7-1925.

Just as Bengal has decided to collect a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs for a memorial to Deshbandhu and to start, in his ancestral home, a hospital for women to be named after him and an institution for training nurses, so the country as a whole should also decide to do something to perpetuate his sacred memory. I had been consulting Bengali friends what should be done, but being of the view that I should make no suggestion before the advice of Motilalji, I did not publicly express my ideas on the subject. I have now had discussions with Panditji, the revered Basanti Devi and Deshbandhu's close associates and followers, and have issued an appeal under some signatures, a translation of which the reader will find on the first page.

I have showed clearly that Deshbandhu had finally come to believe so firmly in the spinning-wheel and khadi that, leaving these, we should think of no other means of perpetuating his memory.

If anyone asks why we should not have a statue or some other similar form of memorial, the reply is that such local memorials will be put up in many cities. We should think of something through which Deshbandhu will be remembered even by growing boys and girls, by the rich and the poor, something which will be in the nature of a permanent blessing for the country and which is not beyond our means. The only thing of this kind is the spinning-wheel and khadi.

But, what about the parliamentary activities? It is doubtful if Deshbandhu's memory can be kept alive for ever through these. The work will certainly go on, but we know Deshbandhu himself has said that these activities are of passing importance and that their field is limited. Khadi work is the only activity which can engage everyone and which concerns everyone.

Such questions were also raised when, after the Lokamanya's death, there was a proposal for a memorial to him. But afterwards it was admitted by all that he had spent his life in giving to the country the message: "Swaraj is my birthright." Deshbandhu's task and ours was to take up that message and think out universal and enduring scope for carrying it into effect. Among these, we gave the first place to the spinning-wheel and khadi, and, through them, to the boycott of foreign cloth. Deshbandhu's work thus lay in organizing the means. This is why, during the last year of his

life, he was always exhorting people to take up village reconstruction. He harped on this in the Assembly and also as a Mayor, and in his speech at Faridpur he stated plainly that lawyers might go on with parliamentary work but ordinary people should devote themselves to village reconstruction. In Darjeeling he finally came to the conclusion that village reconstruction meant the spinning-wheel and khadi. Deshbandhu saw clearly that, in the solar system of the means of swaraj, the spinning-wheel held the place of the sun, and he even sent a message to his followers that they should take up the work of village reconstruction through it.

This was Deshbandhu's last will and testament in politics. It is our duty to water the seed which he sowed and help it to grow into a tree. Hence, promoting the spinning-wheel movement is the only right way of perpetuating his memory.

Let us now consider how much we should raise. Contrary to my usual practice, I have not specified a particular sum which we should collect, for there is no upward limit to the figure. Moreover, wherever I lay down a particular figure, it becomes a very heavy weight on my mind and I insist on its being reached at any cost. This time, too, I have fixed a figure in my mind and I insist on its being reached at any cost; but I do not want to involve in it the friends who have signed the appeal with me. Out of their regard for me and faith in the people, they would subscribe to the figure and invite a responsibility on themselves, but they would not be able to give all or most of their time for reaching the figure.

However, the reader should understand that we wish to start a business which would have a turn-over of sixty crores. No sum can be too much for this purpose. But I have unshakable faith that, as people observe the success of the khadi movement, their confidence in it will increase and we shall get more and more money.

As pointed out in the leaflet, the contributions we get will depend on three things: people's love for Deshbandhu, their faith in khadi and the spinning-wheel and their confidence in the trustees. The whole country has demonstrated its love for Deshbandhu. My experience is that people's faith in khadi and the spinning-wheel is steadily growing. The trustees are known to the country. With a man of transparent honesty like Jamnalalji as treasurer and an equally conscientious and upright secretary in Jawaharlal, there can be no reason for distrust.

I wish that no one will wait to see what others do. Readers of *Navajivan* may send to it whatever amounts they wish to contribute. Their contributions will be acknowledged in the paper. If they are sent directly to Jamnalalji, *Navajivan* will be saved the trouble of maintaining the accounts and passing them on to him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1925

267. MISCELLANEOUS

Visible *v.* Invisible

A friend writes to say:[1]

This trend of thought is entirely correct; however, it should not have arisen as a result of my article. All of us desire *moksha*, whether consciously or unconsciously. In my article, however, I considered only the value of the service rendered by workers. In addition, I also discussed, in passing, the kind of service that the people welcome today. The world hardly knows true sannyasis. These keep working in an invisible manner. To them, praise is as good as censure; in other words, it could be said that they fight shy of praise. In my article I discussed no such persons at all. Moreover, the service of those whose motive is to gain praise has little value. Monuments to honour them as well as the so-called sannyasis have been raised and will continue to be raised. In the article, the reference was only to such selfless service as was rendered by Deshbandhu and, in this connection, I indicated that in the present age those who come forward to safeguard the people's freedom are worshipped. Such persons could hardly afford to remain unseen. In other words, one who works in the political field cannot possibly remain hidden. For him, there is no other alternative but to come into contact with thousands of people, hence the world cannot fail to take note of this service. We should be aware of one thing alone viz., even those workers who were frauds have had monuments erected in their honour; we should, therefore, guard ourselves against the temptation of doing anything in order to win glory. We should rather fight shy of it. However, when we find that people have been showering affection on an illustrious worker like Deshbandhu, we realize that they readily appreciate service rendered for the welfare of others.

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had offered some comments on Gandhiji's obituary notice on Das; *vide* "Long Live Deshbandhu!", 28-6-1925.

Moreover, though their assessment is sometimes wrong, it is more often right. Our dharma today is to serve the country in a non-violent and truthful manner. All of us should contribute our share of service, while maintaining an indifference towards the resulting praise or blame.

THE VOLUNTEER'S DHARMA

A volunteer writes as follows:[1]

I have omitted from this letter portions dealing with certain facts. The caution is quite relevant. The purpose of the correspondent is to state that we should not be greedy and that we should do nothing which might go against the responsibility which has been entrusted to us. We should have nothing to do with the private affairs of our host. Where is the room for a personal connection when the relationship is a public one ? Wherever a volunteer happens to stay, he does so not because of any personal friendship but only because of his work, and therefore regards the place as a guest-house. Moreover, one who desires to be pure always avoids meeting a woman when she is alone. This is the dharma not only of the volunteer but also of a friend, a guest, a dependent and of every man. No one should sleep near a married couple's room. This is gentlemanly conduct. Unfortunately, we do not have such facilities in our houses and we do not have the habit of practising such discretion; however, there can be no difference of opinion regarding the propriety and necessity of having a married couple's room away from those of others. The volunteer should during his stay exercise great care wherever such facilities do not exist and, if he finds this difficult he should look for accommodation elsewhere.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1925

268. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"

July 27, 1925

Lokamanya lived and died for swaraj. He taught us to believe that swaraj was our birthright. I know that we cannot regain this birthright of ours without reinstating the charkha in our villages in its ancient dignity. This we cannot do unless we, the educated class, learn the beautiful life-giving art of spinning and wear khadi, whether it is coarse or fine, whether it is dear or cheap. No price is too great to pay for swaraj. If, then, we would honour the memory of Lokamanya, let us solemnly resolve to spin at least half an hour every day and habitually wear khadi and induce others to do likewise.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 1-8-1925

269. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

CALCUTTA,
Shravana Sud 6 [July 27, 1925][1]

BHAI BENARSIDASJI,

I write this with my left-hand as the right hand fingers ache. I have your letter. I have written to Chhaganlal about the money and have asked him to send you all the balance if he has no difficulty. I take it that you will send the account directly to Mr. Petit. I also take it that whatever we are doing this time is in perfect conformity with our agreement with Mr. Petit.

Towards the end of your letter I notice some anger and despair. What is the reason?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
FEROZABAD
DIST. AGRA

From a photostat of the Hindi original: G.N. 2520

[1] The postmark is dated "July 28, 1925".

270. LETTER TO D. HANUMANT RAO

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE,
[CALCUTTA,]
July [28], 1925

MY DEAR HANUMANT RAO,

My right hand requires rest. I am therefore dictating this. It was a delight to receive your letter. I shall not be satisfied unless I see you strong, healthy and active. I want you to become a walking advertisement of nature cure.

My impression, which is growing stronger daily, is that water cure is only an indifferent thing. The real cure has still to be found and that is air. There is still a step further, but that is far away from this. We do not realize the value of fresh air and different climates. I wish you could change from climate to climate till you find a suitable one where you can completely restore yourself. Do send Mr. Sharma. I am in Calcutta up to 31st August probably; certainly up to the middle of it. May have to be absent for two or three days. I shall try to give him whatever time I can spare. How is Krishnaiya ?

Yours sincerely,

D. HANUMANT RAO, ESQ.
DIGUMARTI HOUSE
BERHAMPORE
GANJAM DIST.

From a photostat of a typewritten copy: S.N. 10593

271. *LETTER TO W. H. PITT*

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE,
July 28, 1925

DEAR MR. PITT,

I have your confidential letter.[1] I appreciate the force of your reasoning and the goodwill lying behind it. The fundamental difference still remains both because of our temperamental differences and apart from these the point of view from which each of us looks at the same question. However, my business is to meet as far as it is possible those who may be interested in solving the same question, whether as friends, opponents or neutrals. I am now corresponding with Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, who, as you know, is my co-worker in this matter, and on whose judgment I place the greatest reliance. I am asking him even to go to Vaikom or Trivandrum if necessary. Meanwhile I shall continue to observe perfect reticence in public. No forward step will be taken without due notice to you and without the greatest deliberation. The assurance you have given me that the authorities are doing their best to remove the evil is a great temptation for me to fall in with your suggestion. But from this distance I do not want to trust to my unaided judgment.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

My right [hand] is disabled.[2]

From a photostat of a handwritten copy: S.N. 11100

[1] *Vide* Appendix III.
[2] The letter is in Mahadev Desai's hand.

272. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE,
July 28, 1925

MY DEAR C. R.,

My hand requires rest for a few days. I am, therefore, dictating my correspondence. I hope you received a letter I sent to you from Mr. Pitt. Here is another and a copy of my reply.[1] I am also sending you Kelappan's letters. Please advise. You may enter into direct correspondence with the Commissioner if you wish and write to Kelappan yourself.[2] As you will see from my letter to the Commissioner, I am inclined to fall in with his suggestion, but I am in a fog. It is necessary to understand the viewpoint of the volunteers. You will also consider Kelappan's proposal that he should be relieved. I feel that it would be necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11103

273. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE,
July 28, 1925

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter.[3] I have also a long letter[4] from Mr. Pitt. I send you a copy of that letter as also copies of my letters to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Rajagopalachari. Please correspond with the latter and give him your views. If, consistently with the upkeep of the Ashram, you can be relieved, you could certainly go and take charge of the Kerala Committee.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Rajagopalachari accordingly communicated with Pitt who, in a letter of September 2, acknowledged Rajagopalachari's letter of August 19.

[3] *Vide* Appendix IV.

[4] *Vide* Appendix III.

I hope you are now completely restored. Workers must not get ill.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11102

274. LETTER TO FRED E. CAMPBELL

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 28, 1925

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND[1],

I like your frank and sincere letter[2] for which I thank you.

You seem to have taken it for granted that I hate the British. What makes you think so? I have hundreds of friends among the British people. I cannot love the Mussalmans and for that matter the Hindus if I hate the British. My love is not an exclusive affair. If I hate the British today, I would have to hate the Mohammedans tomorrow and the Hindus the day after. But what I do detest is the system of government that the British have set up in my country. It has almost brought about the economic and moral ruin of the people of India. But just as I love my wife and my children, in spite of their faults which are many, I love also the British in spite of the bad system for which they have unfortunately made themselves responsible. That love which is blind is no love, that love which shuts its eyes to the faults of loved ones is par-

[1] Campbell described himself as a young boy of 15 from Kansas, U.S.A.

[2] In his letter of May 4, Campbell had written: "A few days ago I heard a sermon in one of our Christian churches in which the minister gave a vivid account of your fasting in order to stop the hard feeling between the Mohammedans and Hindus. . . . I have to say is that the man said that you were the foremost example of Christ today, although you are not a Christian. After hearing this, I determined to read more about you. In this I read of your troubles with the British. What is your main reason for hatred towards them? Is it a commercial matter? If you could find time to answer this, I would be more than pleased. I am thanking you in advance."

tial and even dangerous. You must write again if this letter does not satisfy you.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10547

275. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MISSIONARIES

July 28, 1925

I had the pleasure of delivering an address before the missionaries in Calcutta at Y.M.C.A. on 28th ultimo. I have been supplied with shorthand notes of that address, and as it was of general interest I reproduce below an abridgment of it. I have omitted no salient thought or expression, but I have omitted some descriptive passages.

M. K. G.

Not many of you perhaps know that my association with Christians, not Christians so called but real Christians, dates from 1889, when as a lad I found myself in London; and that association has grown riper as years have rolled on. In South Africa, where I found myself in the midst of inhospitable surroundings, I was able to make hundreds of Christian friends. I came in touch with the late Mr. Spencer Watton, Director of South Africa General Mission, and, later, with the great divine, Rev. Mr. A. Murray and several others.

My acquaintance, therefore, this evening with so many missionaries is by no means a new thing. There was even a time in my life when a very sincere and intimate friend of mine, a great and good Quaker, had designs on me. (Laughter.) He thought that I was too good not to become a Christian. I was sorry to have disappointed him. One missionary friend of mine in South Africa still writes to me and asks me, 'How is it with you?' I have always told this friend that so far as I know, it is all well with me. If it was prayer that these friends expected me to make, I was able to tell them that every day the heart-felt prayer within the closed door of my closet went to the Almighty to show me light and give wisdom and courage to follow that light.

[1] Some further correspondence appears to have ensued; *vide* Vol. XXX, "Letter to Fred E. Campbell", 23-4-1926.

In answer to promises made to one of these Christian friends of mine, I thought it my duty to see one of the biggest of Indian Christians, as I was told he was,—the late Kali Charan Banerjee. I went over to him—I am telling you of the deep search that I have undergone in order that I might leave no stone unturned to find out the true path—I went to him with an absolutely open mind and in a receptive mood, and I met him also under circumstances which were most affecting. I found that there was much in common between Mr. Banerjee and myself. His simplicity, his humility, his courage, his truthfulness, all these things I have all along admired. He met me when his wife was on her death-bed. You cannot imagine a more impressive scene, a more ennobling circumstance. I told Mr. Banerjee, 'I have come to you as a seeker,'—this was in 1901—'I have come to you in fulfilment of a sacred promise I have made to some of my dearest Christian friends that I will leave no stone unturned to find out the true light.' I told him that I had given my friends the assurance that no worldly gain would keep me away from the light, if I could but see it. Well, I am not going to engage you in giving a description of the little discussion that we had between us. It was very good, very noble. I came away, not sorry, not dejected, not disappointed, but I felt sad that even Mr. Banerjee could not convince me. This was my final deliberate striving to realize Christianity as it was presented to me. Today my position is that though I admire much in Christianity, I am unable to identify myself with orthodox Christianity. I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism as I know it, entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being and I find a solace in the *Bhagavad Gita* and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. Not that I do not prize the ideal presented therein, not that some of the precious teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have not left a deep impression upon me, but I must confess to you that when doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon I turn to the *Bhagavad Gita*, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita.*

I have told you all these things in order to make it absolutely clear to you where I stand, so that I may have, if you will, closer touch with you. I must add that I did not stop at studying the Bible and the commentaries and other books on Christianity

that my friends placed in my hands; but I said to myself, if I was to find my satisfaction through reasoning, I must study the scriptures of other religions also and make my choice. And I turned to the Koran. I tried to understand what I could of Judaism as distinguished from Christianity. I studied Zoroastrianism and I came to the conclusion that all religions were right, but every one of them imperfect, imperfect naturally and necessarily, —because they were interpreted with our poor intellects, sometimes with our poor hearts, and more often misinterpreted. In all religions, I found to my grief, that there were various and even contradictory interpretations of some texts, and I said to myself, 'Not these things for me. If I want the satisfaction of my soul, I must feel my way. I must wait silently upon God and ask Him to guide me.' There is a beautiful verse in Sanskrit which says 'God helps only when man feels utterly helpless and utterly humble'. Some of you have come from the Tamil land. When I was studying Tamil, I found in one of the books of Dr. Pope a Tamil proverb which means 'God helps the helpless'. I have given you this life-story of my own experience for you to ponder over.

You, the missionaries come to India thinking that you come to a land of heathens, of idolators, of men who do not know God. One of the greatest of Christian divines, Bishop Heber, wrote the two lines which have always left a sting with me: "Where every prospect pleases, and man alone is vile." I wish he had not written them. My own experience in my travels throughout India has been to the contrary. I have gone from one end of the country to the other, without any prejudice, in a relentless search after truth, and I am not able to say that here in this fair land, watered by the great Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Jumna, man is vile. He is not vile. He is as much a seeker after truth as you and I are, possibly more so. This reminds me of a French book translated for me by a French friend. It is an account of an imaginary expedition in search of knowledge. One party landed in India and found Truth and God personified, in a little pariah's hut. I tell you there are many such huts belonging to the untouchables where you will certainly find God. They do not reason but they persist in their belief that God is. They depend upon God for His assistance and find it too. There are many stories told throughout the length and breadth of India about these noble untouchables. Vile as some of them may be, there are noblest specimens of humanity in their midst. But does my experience exhaust itself merely with the untouchables? No. I am here

to tell you that there are non-Brahmins, there are Brahmins who are as fine specimens of humanity as you will find in any place on the earth. There are Brahmins today in India who are embodiments of self-sacrifice, godliness, and humility. There are Brahmins who are devoting themselves body and soul to the service of untouchables, with no expectation of reward from the untouchables, but with execration from orthodoxy. They do not mind it, because in serving pariahs they are serving God. I can quote chapter and verse from my experience. I place these facts before you in all humility for the simple reason that you may know this land better, the land to which you have come to serve. You are here to find out the distress of the people of India and remove it. But I hope you are here also in a receptive mood and, if there is anything that India has to give, you will not stop your ears, you will not close your eyes and steel your hearts, but open up your ears, eyes and, most of all, your hearts to receive all that may be good in this land. I give you my assurance that there is a great deal of good in India. Do not flatter yourselves with the belief that a mere recital of that celebrated verse in St. John makes a man a Christian. If I have read the Bible correctly, I know many men who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ or have even rejected the official interpretation of Christianity will, probably, if Jesus came in our midst today in the flesh, be owned by him more than many of us. I therefore ask you to approach the problem before you with open-heartedness, and humility.

I was engaged in a friendly conversation with some missionaries this morning. I do not want to relate that conversation. But I do want to say that they are fine specimens of humanity. They did not want to misunderstand me, but I had to pass nearly one hour and a half in my attempt to explain to them that, in writing what I had written, I had not written anything in a spirit of ill will or hatred towards Englishmen. I was hard put to it to carry that conviction. In fact, I do not know whether I carried that conviction to them at all. If salt loseth its savour, wherewith will it be salted? If I could not drive home the truth that was in me to the three friends who certainly came with open minds, how should I fare with others? It has often occurred to me that a seeker after truth has to be silent. I know the wonderful efficacy of silence. I visited a Trappist monastery in South Africa. A beautiful place it was. Most of the inmates of that place were under a vow of silence. I enquired of the Father the motive of it and he said that the motive was apparent. 'We

are frail human beings. We do not know very often what we say. If we want to listen to the still small voice that is always speaking within us, it will not be heard if we continually speak.' I understood that precious lesson. I know the secret of silence. I do not know just now as I speak to you whether it would not have been wise if I had said nothing to those friends beyond saying, 'We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away.' As I speak to you, I feel humiliated. Why did I argue with these friends? But I say these things to you, first of all, to make this confession and, secondly, to tell you also that, if you will refuse to see the other side, if you will refuse to understand what India is thinking, then you will deny yourselves the real privilege of service. I have told my missionary friends, 'Noble as you are, you have isolated yourselves from the people whom you want to serve.' I cannot help recalling to you the conversation I related in Darjeeling at the Missionary Language School. Lord Salisbury was waited upon by a deputation of missionaries in connection with China and this deputation wanted protection. I cannot recall the exact words, but give you the purport of the answer Lord Salisbury gave. He said, "Gentlemen, if you want to go to China, to preach the message of Christianity, then do not ask for assistance of temporal power. Go with your lives in your hands and if the people of China want to kill you, imagine that you have been killed in the service of God." Lord Salisbury was right. Christian missionaries come to India under the shadow, or, if you like, under the protection of a temporal power, and it creates an impassable bar.

If you give me statistics that so many orphans have been reclaimed and brought to the Christian faith, I would accept them, but I do not feel convinced thereby that it is your mission. In my opinion, your mission is infinitely superior to that. You want to find men in India and if you want to do that, you will have to go to the lowly cottages not to give them something, might be to take something from them. A true friend as I claim to be of the missionaries of India and of the Europeans, I speak to you what I feel from the bottom of my heart. I miss receptiveness, humility, willingness on your part to identify yourselves with the masses of India. I have talked straight from my heart. May it find a response from your hearts.

At the end of the address questions were invited. The most important questions and their answers are given below:

Q. How do you think should the missionaries indentify themselves with the masses?

A. The question is somewhat embarrassing. But I would venture to say, 'Copy Charlie Andrews.'

Another in the audience asked:

What definite work would you suggest that a missionary should do for and among the masses?

A. Since I have been challenged I must unhesitatingly answer, 'The Spinning-wheel.' You naturally laugh, but if you knew the masses as I do, you will look upon this very simple instrument of torture (here Mr. Gandhi produced the *takli* he carries with him) with seriousness. You cannot present the hungry and famished masses with God. Their God is their food. General Booth knew what he was doing when at his numerous depots the first thing he did to the hungry men and women who flocked there was to give them a plate of soup. Before he would give them their next meal, he called upon them to make splinters for his match factory, and then he introduced them to God. The famished millions are famishing not because there is not enough food produced in India, but because they have no work to do. The only work for the millions is the spinning-wheel. I know the Industrial Mission House in Calcutta. It is good in its way, but it does not touch even the fringe of the question. The problem is how to take work to the cottages of these men, cottages which are scattered over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 broad. They will not take the spinning-wheel unless they learn the art themselves and unless they spin to set an example to these men who have lost faith in themselves and faith in everything and everybody. And the spinning-wheel is useless unless you and I wear khaddar. Hence it is that I have not hesitated to say to Lord Reading or to Lord Willingdon that I will not be satisfied unless they and their orderlies are dressed from top to toe in khaddar.

A third inquirer asked:

Do you definitely feel the presence of the living Christ within you?

A. If it is the historical Jesus, surnamed Christ, that the inquirer refers to, I must say I do not. If it is an adjective signifying one of the names of God, then I must say I do feel the presence of God—call him Christ, call him Krishna, call him Rama. We have one thousand names to denote God, and if I did not feel the presence of God within me, I see so much of misery and disappointment every day that I would be a raving maniac and my destination would be the Hooghli.

Young India, 6-8-1925

276. APPEAL FOR ALL-BENGAL DESHBANDHU FUND

The All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Committee has at last fixed the final date for closing the subscriptions at 31st August. I would like the public to note that no such date was fixed before. Finality must be final and cannot admit of reopening. I, however, suggested that we should make a Herculean effort to collect the full ten lakhs on or before the 1st of July. In this we failed, but I cannot say for want of effort. We failed for want of organization. It is a fine tribute to the memory of Deshbandhu that we shall, before this week is out, have collected six lakhs. It will have been fully five weeks for the collection of six lakhs, and that gives an average of a little less than a lakh and a quarter a week, or nearly seventeen thousand per day.

Now, in spite of a little better though by no means a satisfactory organization, we shall not be able to keep up the average as a majority of large subscriptions have been collected. It is only on the basis of past experience that the Memorial Committee has fixed the 31st August as the very last date for receiving collections. It is a long enough time for collecting what must be regarded as a paltry sum for Bengal, and for a purpose so sacred as that of perpetuating the memory of Deshbandhu. The public will remember that only three months were fixed for collecting one crore for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. On the assumption that six lakhs will have been collected before the end of this month, there will be thirty-two days left for collecting four lakhs. That leaves an average exactly of Rs. 12,500 per day. And if we are to secure the sum by the end of next month, we must never fall below the average. And those who are collecting and are concerned with the reputation of Bengal and with the success of the Memorial will, I hope, make it a point of honour to secure the daily average. I remind the principals of schools and colleges all over Bengal of their duty. I know that the school-going boys and girls are as eager as any to pay their mite. They simply await the call. I know, too, that many zamindars who owe not a little to Deshbandhu, have not yet sent in their subscriptions. May I respectfully ask them to send them in unsolicited?

Nor have all the ladies paid their quota. I have been told that they merge in their husbands. I respectfully dissent from that view, I want them to give, each one, their ornaments and pocket money as I did at the time of collecting the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

I ask them now to part with what is their own without asking their partners to replace them. Then there is no loss felt; only the pleasure of giving remains. It is in that spirit that hundreds of sisters have already paid. May I ask the remaining ones to copy that spirit if the memory of Deshbandhu is a treasure for them and if a decently equipped hospital for women and equally decent institution for training nurses appeal to them as worthy objects?

Forward, 29-7-1925

277. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

148, Russa Road,
Calcutta,
July 29, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

A magazine editor has sent me an article he has written on the Prophet and which has given rise to an exciting meeting in Ahmedabad. He sends me also a copy of the *Khilafat* dated 29th May.

The article is not discourteous or abusive. I do not think that it warrants all the excitement that it has given rise to. At the same time it is an ignorant writing. The writer does not appear to me to have read any good biography. Certainly, he has not read the Koran. He has given an estimate of the life of the Prophet which we find in the ordinary European reviews. The writer has asked for my opinion and I have told him as much as I have told you. I would not have worried you about this thing, had it not been for the number of *Khilafat* that he has sent me.

In my opinion, the *Khilafat* writer has unnecessarily excited passion. I have read other portions of that number also out of curiosity, and I must confess that I do not like the language or the general tone of this particular number at all. "Fools, asses, downright lying" and such choice epithets embellish its paragraphs. I think you ought to control the language of the paper. I have not read a single well-thought-out, decent paragraph. I am sure that the writer does not even know that he has used unbecoming language.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

278. *SPEECH AT MEETING OF ANGLO-INDIANS*[1]

July 29, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I suppose it is better for me at the outset of our conversation to say—because we are such a small, beautiful compact gathering—that I would like this to be turned into a conversation rather than a set address by me.[2]

At the outset I would like to clear the ground by taking up the last sentiment of the chairman.[3] I appreciate the view-point that he has placed before me and there was a time when I could also say these things about loyalty. But as you know, for the past six years I have not been speaking of loyalty, but of disloyalty. It is not that I harbour disloyalty towards anything whatsoever, but I do so against all untruth, all that is unjust, all that is evil. This I want to make clear as I do not want to sail under false colours. I remain loyal to an institution so long as that institution conduces to my growth, to the growth of the nation. Immediately I find that the institution instead of conducing to its growth impedes it, I hold it to be my bounden duty to be disloyal to it. I cannot for one moment say that I am loyal to the present Government, that is, to the present system of Government. I assert that I am, every moment of my life, seeking to destroy this system of Government which is sapping the manhood of India, which is sapping its vitality and its resources, which is degrading alike those who are in charge of the system and those who are governed by that system.

But I think that whilst we may agree to differ on this very fundamental question, we must seek to find out whether there are not many points of contact between you and me—between you and the vast mass of the people who inhabit this beautiful land—if I may say so—of ours. What the ultimate destiny of India will be we do not know, or we know only this much that it is in our making, it will be what everyone of us whose lot is cast in India wants it to be. But beyond this we do not

[1] Gandhiji spoke to a gathering of Anglo-Indians at Wellesley Square in the evening.

[2] This paragraph has been extracted from a report in *Forward*, 30-7-1925.

[3] Dr. Moreno had said that loyalty was the creed of Anglo-Indians.

know, having no control over the minds of millions of human beings who compose Hindustan. But everyone should become an optimist and then there is nothing but the brightest future for this land. That is, today, everyone should be able to say to himself, "I live for this land. I shall die for this land." I want you, therefore, to approach the question in a spirit of service and, when there is that spirit of service, we may erase that disturbing factor. 'Loyalty' or 'disloyalty' does not matter much when a person really wants to serve.

I have come here this evening in a spirit of utter humility and in a spirit of absolute friendship and goodwill towards you. During my incessant wanderings, I have come in contact not merely with Hindus, not merely with Mussalmans, but I have come deliberately in contact with all sorts and conditions of people. I hope I have made myself accessible to anybody who has wanted to see me, but I have even gone out of my way to search out the minorities. As the Mussalmans are the big minority, I, as representing the majority of India, think it is my duty to befriend them even though they may reject my advice. You do not occupy even that numerical position and, therefore, I have not, wherever I found opportunities to approach you, hesitated to meet you. But I am here to confess to you that the Anglo-Indians have not freely reciprocated that feeling.

My largest contact with the Anglo-Indians has been on the railway trains, because they have somehow or other fought shy of the public meetings, perhaps because of the notion that these meetings were meetings of disloyalists. And as you have made loyalty your creed, naturally these meetings have repelled you. On the trains, however, I have sought you out.

As an instance of how the Anglo-Indians have isolated themselves from the Indians, Mr. Gandhi gave a vivid narrative of his meeting with some Anglo-Indian youngsters who travelled with him in the same train from Ajmer. He had an occasion to listen to their profuse vocabulary of slang until they recognized him, shed their naturalness and put on manners. And the behaviour of even those boys afforded ample proof of their isolation. One of them liked Indian sweets. But he dared not purchase them when others saw him. "I eat the sweets only when no one sees me," he said. He was not an Indian, he thought, and did not want to be observed by Indians. This, Mr. Gandhi said, was due to their schooling.

Though you have got Indian blood of which you need be proud—you need not be ashamed of that—I know when you receive a reminder of it you are pained.

Mr. Gandhi next told them the story of a young Anglo-Indian who opened his heart to him, who though getting Rs. 400 was scarcely able to make the two ends meet, who had to live beyond his means, because "I must look a European every inch of me."

I was stabbed to listen to his story. This is doing violence to humanity, I said to myself. He was a Christian, there was nothing wrong in his demeanour and in spite of the surface polish there was the canker eating into his vitals that he was leading an untrue life.

Well, I have given you two telling instances. You have to make a choice. What shall you do? Will you attempt the impossible or will you be what you should be: every inch of you Indian? Let me tell you one thing more. If you go to South Africa or Australia or any Dominion, you know that the same thing which is in store for me is in store for you. You will be classed among the coloured men and you will have no status. Those of you who may possess a white skin may deceive the Immigration Officer, but your relatives and sons may betray you. That is the position. The colour bar is too terrible there. You also will be counted among moral lepers. Mr. Malan now says he would not drive us out, he would starve us out of South Africa, and would practise hypocrisy double-distilled. The "bar sinister", as Lord Morley put it, applies to us even in England. Now it is your privilege to fight this. If you cast in your lot with the masses of India from which you have sprung, there is nothing but hope for you, me and even for Government to whom you think you are bound to be loyal.

You can become a bridge so that all Indians and all Englishmen may cross to and fro without either feeling injured or hurt or feeling any degree of inconvenience. But if you want to aspire after the heights of Simla, well, those heights are unattainable and therefore poverty must be your lot, and also the lot of India. An important community like the Anglo-Indians, brave, resourceful, you are going to perdition simply because you would not see the plain truth, but persist in an impossible attempt. In this process, you are cutting yourselves away from the masses. Thus you have been ostracized by Indians and Europeans both.

He gave another anecdote of a very cultured Anglo-Indian in Kathiawar trying to live the European way of life, being ostracized everywhere. He said:

The picture of that tragedy still rises before me.

I do want to tell you at this critical moment of our national

life, "Anglo-Indians, make your choice with determination and courage, whether you want to go away from the nation and whether you want to live up to the style of Europeans." Mind you, I am not asking you to cut yourselves adrift from Englishmen. They are far more precious to me today than they were before, because today I am leading the natural life. There was a time when I was also aping the Europeans. Little things guided my life then. But at a precious moment of my life, I threw them into the Indian Ocean, and turned my back on them. 'No more this life for me,' I said, 'no more shall I consent to become the "blotting-sheet of civilization," ' to use Sidgwick's picturesque phrase. Hence I have become more lovable, more approachable. I had never before in my life so many friends in Europe as I have today. That is because I have shed all unnaturalness. I may be blunt, but bluntness is better than put-up courtesy. I would, therefore, ask you to shed this aping habit, to think for the masses, merge yourselves into the masses so that they can be lifted and we can show to the world a beautiful specimen of Indian humanity in which all races can blend and mingle, each retaining its special admirable characteristics, each keeping every bit of what is best in it. That is your privilege, if you will exercise it.

I have talked to you about your duty. You will naturally like to know my duty. Well, if I became the Viceroy of India, which I think is never coming to pass, I would simply give you and the other minorities the choice and ask you to take what you want. I would call all the leaders of the parties and tell them my proposal. Then I would call such of you as are numerically weakest to come first and to ask what you want. In services I would insist on a decent examination test, i.e., I would only ask a candidate, 'How much of a man or woman you are? Have you got the ability to rise to the occasion?' Provided he or she passes these tests, I would select first the one who belongs to the least numerical section. I would thus give preference to all minorities along just lines, consistent with the welfare of India. When I use this phrase, I assure you I am not doing any verbal jugglery. It will be none of my object to see that only Hindus can come in. Welfare of India as a whole, not of Hindus and Mussalmans or of a particular community. I would not flatter you or pamper you, but give you your due.

Mr. Gandhi next suggested that the Anglo-Indians' interests, as those of all minorities, would under his scheme, be protected by a voluntary pact—a pact not supported by legislation which always presupposes a third party,

but absolutely voluntary like the pact between himself and the Swarajists, like the pact he offered to the Mussalmans at Delhi. So long as they had no faith in the justice of the majorities, they must have this protection by a voluntary pact. The parties to the pact were in honour bound to act according to the pact. If they reduced it to a scrap of paper, they would do so at their risk. To the Anglo-Indians he would say that, if the pact was not respected, if sacred promises were not carried out, they could have revenge on those who broke the pact. Concluding, Mr. Gandhi said:

I have dissected my heart. It has come unpolished in a spirit of friendship. May you also receive it in such a spirit.

Mr. Gandhi then invited questions. Dr. Moreno was the first questioner: "What would be your attitude if, as it appears, in the scheme of Indianization Anglo-Indians would be adversely affected?"

ANSWER: I would not oust a single Anglo-Indian if it was in my hands.

QUESTION: You have made over the Congress to Swarajists and yet you talk of an all-party programme. How can the Anglo-Indians engage in obstructionist tactics with Swarajists?

ANSWER: I have not made over the Congress to the Swarajists. I have absolved them from the Pact entered into between them and me. I could not, even if I would, hand over the Congress to anyone. It only means that every member can exercise his judgment in respect of the alteration or otherwise of the franchise. The Congress, which was made at Belgaum a non-political organization, will now be converted into a predominantly political institution, with the result that political resolutions could be brought forward now, and the bar would be removed from the path of those who could not enter the Congress as a non-political body. It would not be a Swarajist body, it would be a predominantly political body. The Swarajists are, it is true, predominant today, but that is because others have kept back, and if they outnumber others, it will be because the others have no organization. As regards obstruction, it may be wrong, it may be right. But you surely do not expect to react on the Swarajists by standing out of the Congress. Join the Congress in large numbers and make them change their policy if you wish.

In reply to a question how Mr. Gandhi could secure their interests when under proportional representation they could get none at all, Mr. Gandhi made his proposal of the voluntary pact clearer.

Before I would draw up the swaraj scheme, I would ask you what you want. A document setting out the terms would be

publicly acknowledged. Assuming a fair measure of public opinion and honesty, Anglo-Indians and other minorities could not be possibly treated unfairly.

Questioned as to why Mr. Gandhi had not signed Mrs. Besant's memorandum on the Commonwealth of India Bill, he said that as he had said before, if he got a cablegram from Lord Birkenhead that the Bill would be passed if he subscribed to it, he would cable his signature. But he had declined to associate his name with the Bill simply because he did not want to be insulted. When he knew that the throwing of the Bill on the scrap-heap was an absolute certainty, as he felt it could not otherwise be, he could not possibly sign it. He had had enough insults before, but he had never courted them. He had taken insults in good grace when they had been flung in his face. But, in this particular case, he thought it would be courting an insult, which he was not prepared to do. As it is, he had got an indication of it that very day. Referring to that indication he said:

I made a most innocent practical suggestion to the Government of India. Deshbandhu Das had played the game, and you know how much at heart he had the case of the political prisoners. I said to the Government, 'Will you perform one single graceful act which will strike the imagination of the nation? Will you release the prisoners?' If that was done, it would have served a double purpose. That would have taken the sting, if there was any, out of these political prisoners, because they would have felt that they had been released out of respect to the memory of Deshbandhu and they could not commit a breach of trust reposed in them. And, then by this act the Government would have gained a supreme moral victory, so that they could have cleared the atmosphere for negotiations. But no. Lord Birkenhead says he is prepared to consider anything that Indians might have to suggest in order to allay animosities, but the suggestion made is not practical. I tell you I have not the ingenuity to make a more practical suggestion than what I have made. But it has gone to the usual waste-paper basket. So if these little things could not be had, what is the use of going on with the big Commonwealth of India Bill? Mrs. Besant has a robust optimism and, though on the wrong side of life like me, she thinks she must work on.

Another friend asked as to what Mr. Gandhi would suggest in the transition stage, if, for instance, they dropped the prefix 'Anglo' and joined the Congress. They would lose some of the trifling privileges they enjoy, and would get nothing to compensate for them.

That was the fairest of questions. For some purposes, you say, you are classed with Europeans. I have asked you to shed

those privileges. You have mentioned the eligibility to the Indian Auxiliary Force. I would suggest that you will proudly say, 'We will have none of these special privileges. They demoralize and pauperize us.' I want you to think in the terms of the masses and not in the terms of the hierarchy and priesthood of Anglo-India. The upper section amongst you wants to be absorbed by Europeans—an impossible ambition—and the lower would be absorbed in the Indians in spite of itself. This involuntary merging can do no good. How then, you will ask, is it possible for you to be absorbed voluntarily? Well, I would not want you to be lulled into a false sense of security, but I would ask you to unhesitatingly shed the unnatural life you lead. If after becoming Indians, you are betrayed by the Indians themselves, you will turn rebels against the Indians, but refuse to aspire to be Europeans again. I ask you not to be cowed down by the thought of a small minority. It is sometimes a privilege. I have so often said that I would love to be in the minority of one, because this artificial majority, which is the result of the masses' reverence for me, is a clog in my progress. But for the clog, I would hurl defiance today. I can neither be quickened into vanity by blind adoration, nor shall I sacrifice a tittle of my principle for mass adoration. The Englishmen are a microscopic minority. They do not fear that they would be engulfed. Of course, at the back of their security is the force of the bayonet. But it will some day ruin them if they are not warned betimes. You may rely either on your soul-force or sword-force. But in no case would you put up with the present degradation.

Asked whether he was an optimist, and if so, why he should despair of the future because Lord Birkenhead might not be always in office, he said:

I am an irrepressible optimist, because I believe in myself. That sounds very arrogant; doesn't it? But I say it from the depths of my humility. I believe in the supreme power of God. I believe in Truth and, therefore, I have no doubt in the future of this country or the future of humanity. Whatever Lord Birkenhead may say, I trust in God who knows how to confound the wisdom of men. He is a consummate *jadugar*[1] and I have placed myself in His hands. But He is a hard taskmaster. He would accept nothing short of the best you are capable of. To me the change of Government does not mean anything. I am an

[1] Magician

optimist because I expect many things from myself. I have not got them I know, as I am not yet a perfect being. If I was one, I should not even need to reason with you. When I am a perfect being, I have simply to say the word, and the nation will listen. I want to attain that perfection by service.

Young India, 13-8-1925

279. *NOTES*

G. O. M. Centenary

If the reminder was needed, Mr. Bharucha has reminded the public that 4th September next is the centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji. Whilst he was alive, we called him, as he was, the Grand Old Man of India. He was the father of Indian nationalism. He was the first to introduce the word 'swaraj' in Congress parlance and was as ardent an advocate of it as Lokamanya himself. His service to the country was long, steady, selfless. He taught us to understand the poverty of the masses. His articles on that subject are still the Indian patriot's text book. His statistics stand almost unchallenged to this day. He had a record for unblemished character. How shall we celebrate the centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the noblest sons of India? Meetings we must have wherever the Congress flag flies. I would like to make these meetings business meetings that would take us a few steps definitely forward towards our goal. Though a full representative of educated India, Dadabhai thought for and of the masses. His spirit lived in their midst, the swaraj of his dreams included the economic amelioration of the masses. What can better bring the classes nearer to the masses than the spinning-wheel and khaddar? I would suggest raising of subscriptions at these meetings for the Deshbandhu Charkha and Khaddar Memorial. The meetings may also pass resolutions about hand-spinning and use of khaddar. Wherever there is a surplus stock of khaddar, volunteers may dedicate the day to hawking khaddar. From now those who have leisure may utilize the whole of the day for spinning good yarn and presenting it at these meetings for the nation.

These are my suggestions. They may not commend themselves to everybody. Let those who do not appreciate my advice adopt any other form that may commend itself to them, but I hope that all parties without distinction will celebrate the centenary in a manner worthy of the occasion.

China's Plight

I hope that the readers of *Young India* have read the very long cablegram received by me from the Commissioner, Foreign Affairs, National Government, Canton. The cablegram has evidently been sent to several parts of the world.

I do not know what we in India can do to help China in her distress. We ourselves are in need of help. If we had any voice in the management of our own affairs, we should not tolerate the humiliating and degrading spectacle of Indian soldiers shooting innocent Chinese students and others like rabbits, i.e., if the story recited in the cablegram is to be believed. We can, therefore, only pray for their deliverance from all their troubles. But the situation in China reminds us that our slavery is not merely injurious to ourselves, but it is also injurious to our neighbours. It demonstrates also most forcibly that India is being kept under subjection, not merely for the exploitation of India herself, but that it enables Great Britain to exploit the great and ancient Chinese nation.

If any responsible Chinese should read these lines, I would commend to their attention the method that we have adopted in India, that is non-violence. Let the Chinese understand that they are numerically the greatest nation on earth. They have glorious traditions, they are not emasculated as we are. If they would only follow the policy of non-violence and truth, victory is not only certain but it is very near. Surely a nation containing nearly four hundred million souls need not be crushed under the weight of European and Japanese ambition. China can free herself from foreign exploitation by purely internal peaceful effort. If she succeeds in her boycott of foreign goods, she removes the temptation in the way of foreign powers to retain their hold on her.

All-India Spinners' Association

When the Congress has become a predominantly political body and if it is still in some form to represent the masses, there must be a spinners' association all over India which will regulate and develop the spinning part of the franchise, which will take charge of all yarn that spinning members may give and will concentrate itself solely upon hand-spinning and khaddar.

This association, if it comes into being, must be purely a business concern, it must be a permanent body not in any shape or form fluctuating with the fluctuations in the Congress politics. It must, therefore, have a fairly permanent executive. It must

organize a khaddar service. It will, therefore, represent and develop village organization by taking the message of the spinning-wheel to the most distant villages and, for the first time distributing wealth among the villagers instead of draining it away from them. It will be a peaceful penetration into the villages and an outflowing, after a time, of real national life from them. It ought to be the mightiest co-operative effort the world has yet seen. Given a fair amount of talent, only a fair amount of sacrifice, average honesty and support from the monied and middle classes, its success is assured. Let us see what the future has in store for India.

A Misunderstanding

With reference to the two questions by a distinguished Mussalman put to me through a common friend, and dealt with in *Young India* of July 16, the friend tells me that I misunderstood the second question.

> If he had asked that question, I would not have left you for a minute to reply. It would be downright impertinence for any Mussalman to ask you that question, but poor...did not ask the second question in that form. What he said was this, "Mahatmaji talks of love and unity between the two communities, but this won't do at this moment. He should devise some tangible scheme in order to bring about the desired unity, something on the lines of Mr. C. R. Das's pact in Bengal. "

I am sorry that I misunderstood the question, though my impression is that I was so startled by the question as I understood it that I had the friend to repeat it. However, even the question as it now stands need not have been put, if the enquiring friend had followed the proceedings of the Conference at Delhi and the tangible scheme I put forth there. I swear by that scheme even now and feel that we shall have to fall back upon it when we have regained sanity. It is shortly this: There should be an electorate under a franchise which would admit of all capable of understanding their responsibilities being placed on the voters' roll and which would be true reflex of the proportion each community bears to the other in point of numbers and that communal representation should be dealt with outside the law. The proportion to be given to Mussalmans has never worried me. The only thing I would like to guard against is a statutory distinction. I would not have the Government adjust the proportion and provide for its working. However divided we may be amongst ourselves, if

we have the true national consciousness, we must be able to approach the Government with one voice. For the Government there should be neither Mussalman nor Hindu, Christian, Sikh nor Parsi nor Brahmin nor non-Brahmin. For them we must all be nationalists. This solution may not be acceptable, but it cannot be said that I talk of love and unity but devise no tangible scheme. I do not agitate now for its acceptance, because I have admitted that I have lost influence over the vocal sections of both the communities.

Congress Corruption

I receive letters every week complaining that corruption and indiscipline have crept into the Congress ranks, that people have got into the Congress who seek to exploit it for their own private end. Here is the latest typical letter duly signed:

> . . . President, Congress Committee . . . enlisted about 1,300 members for the Congress, but the subscriptions are not forthcoming from him, nor has he submitted any accounts.
>
> With characteristic lack of scruples the Secretary and . . . are not convening the long overdue annual meeting lest they might be turned out of office. In contravention of rules . . . has been making payment without sanction. . . . is a notorious character who collected money which he never accounted for to the authorities.

There are also several other charges mentioned in the foregoing indictment. The complaint too had been received that the Congress Committees in several parts of India have been using monies received by them for purposes other than those for which they were earmarked. I hope that responsible Congressmen will look into their respective organizations and, wherever any corruption or misappropriation is discovered, they will not hesitate to denounce such corruption and remove it.

Deshbandhu and Hand-spinning

Shrijut Priya Rai writing about a charkha which he has invented and which he is trying to perfect says:

> I am impelled to acquaint you with one more fact, that is, as to what Deshbandhu thought of and wanted to do with my charkha. I had occasion to show him the blankets, carpets, coatings and sundries, –product of the yarn from my charkha, and had the privilege of a free expression of my thoughts and ideas. I can never forget the warmth and earnestness with which Deshbandhu talked and listened about charkha and spinning. It was he who unfolded to my vision the immense possibilities of charkha even with our educated young men.

He seemed very much pleased with the little improvement I have been able to set up in my charkha and, as was his wont, requested me to formulate a scheme, whereby, to start with, he could introduce my charkha in the primary schools, financed by the Calcutta Corporation and, later, in bigger areas. I was not ready with a cut-and-dry scheme before the hands of death snatched him away from amongst us. I do not know whether or not it is possible to give effect to the scheme, but I can tell you this that my humble services are at the command of those who might take up the work.

I know this charkha. It can be worked sitting in a chair with the feet, leaving both the hands free, but it is not yet possible for me to recommend it to the public, because its yield per hour is considerably below that of the ordinary charkha.

Priya Babu's charkha would yield no more than 300 yards of yarn per hour against 850 yards,—the highest speed attained by the Khadi Pratishthan pattern. If the inventor can think of improvements which would give a greater yield than the Khadi Pratishthan charkha there should be no difficulty in popularizing his invention.

'Too Costly'

A correspondent from Jamshedpur says that khaddar is too costly for the common or middle-class people; it does not last long; it gets dirty too soon, and to keep it clean means an additional expenditure; and adds, 'Will you please explain in detail how it will be possible for men like us to wear khaddar in these circumstances?'

Although questions like these have been already answered in these pages, it is not superfluous to revert to them again and again. Yard for yard, at the present moment, khaddar is undoubtedly dearer than mill-cloth. But my invariable experience is that those who have taken to khaddar have, consciously or unconsciously, simplified their dress. They do not require so much as when they used mill-cloth. It is not the experience of all that khaddar does not last as long as mill-cloth. In the beginning stages the hand-spun yarn was ill-twisted. Therefore, khaddar woven from such yarn was undoubtedly not durable. But the quality has since improved. I suggest too that if khaddar is washed at home, it will last twice as long as when it is sent to the washermen. I admit that, if khaddar is sent out for washing, the cost of washing khaddar would be greater than that of washing ordinary calico. The only remedy is home-washing which need not frighten

people. Soaking khaddar overnight in hot water with soap enables one to wash it perfectly clean in no time.

When the correspondent says that it gets dirty all too soon, I presume that he implies that being white it shows dirt. If the intention be to conceal dirt the remedy is to colour it precisely in the same manner that mill-cloth is coloured. And at the present moment, plenty of coloured khaddar is available in the market. But let me make the confession that khaddar cannot make headway if the middle-class people compare it in price and everything else with mill-made cloth. The incentive to use khaddar must be national for the middle-class people, and they are expected to put themselves to inconvenience in order to popularize it.

If the State had belonged to the people, it would have protected khaddar by legislation. But seeing that the State is foreign and neutral, if not even hostile to khaddar, it is for the people who believe in its national value to give it due protection by putting up with the inconvenience and extra expenditure that its use may involve before it becomes universal in India. Only five years ago, I sold very coarse and ill-spun and ill-woven khaddar at 17 as. per yard. Such bad khaddar is now nowhere to be seen. Its evolution has been phenomenal, so much so that much superior khaddar is today sold at nine annas per yard in the same part of India. Every attempt is being made to bring down the price of khaddar and, if the All-India Deshbandhu Charkha Memorial becomes a success and the scheme that is now being conceived comes into operation, I am expecting a still further decline in prices.

I would like the readers to remember what I said at Chittagong that, if khaddar is dear, freedom is dearer still. And he who feels for the masses will not grudge them the extra price that during the transition stage has to be paid for khaddar.

An Insult and Charkha

A correspondent writes:

> Fortunately or unfortunately a rich person, holding a Government position, assaulted me the other day. I had to accept ten rupees by way of compensation for injury to my feelings. I feel I can best use the amount by sending it to you kindly to buy charkhas with it for those that deserve them.

I congratulate the donor on his wise decision. As the letter was received on the day on which the appeal for an All-India Deshbandhu Memorial was published, and as that memorial is

to spread the gospel of the charkha, I am sending the amount to the Treasurer and, no doubt, deserving persons will receive spinning-wheels that can be bought with the amount.

Young India, 30-7-1925

280. *CONGRESS AND POLITICAL PARTIES*

I gladly publish the following from Sjt. Satyananda Bose, a veteran Congressman whom I had the pleasure of knowing even while I was in South Africa, because of his help to my late lamented comrade Sorabji of Adajan (Surat):

> Some misapprehension has arisen in the minds of the public in regard to your proposal to hand over the Congress to the Swaraj Party.
>
> It is said that the Congress will henceforth be the tail of the Swaraj Party organization and it will cease to occupy the dominant position in the public life of the country. The provision in your last year's pact with the Swaraj Party, viz., that the latter will carry on the work in connection with the Central and Provincial Legislatures on behalf of the Congress, strengthens this suspicion.
>
> No doubt you have dissolved the pact. But it is suspected that there will be another pact giving to the Swaraj Party the power of direction and control over the Congress in *express words*.
>
> Personally I cannot believe that either you or Pandit Motilal Nehru contemplate this course.
>
> It goes without saying that, as the Swaraj Party is in the majority in the Congress and outside it, they partly will control the Congress for the present. But this position is different from a pact which gives the party a predominant position irrespective of every other fact and consideration.
>
> The Congress ought to be like the British Parliament. In the latter there are members belonging to different political parties and those who are in the majority for the time being guide and control its affairs. This condition is the result of the elections and is *not* due to any agreement arrived at from outside. In the Indian National Congress, too, this constitutional state of things should prevail.
>
> I request you to make your position clear. There is a growing desire amongst the non-Swarajists to join the Congress. I hope nothing will be done to put any obstacle in the way.
>
> The Congress should remain as it has been in the past—the predominant national body, whatever party may control its affairs for the time being.

PS.

Written pacts are artificial, unconstitutional and unnecessary and they only serve to create difference and dissension. Pacts no doubt may be reversed. But why should there be a pact at all?

I do not think that there is anything in my letter to Pandit Motilalji to warrant the misapprehension referred to by Satyananda Babu. All that my letter is intended to convey is that the embargo, for which I made myself responsible, on pure political activities in the Congress at Belgaum should be removed.

Personally, I retain the same opinion that I did last year, that if educated Indians concentrated on the triple constructive programme and made it their predominant occupation, we should be nearer swaraj. But I confess that I have failed to carry that conviction home. I must, therefore, no longer stand in the way of the Congress being developed and guided by educated Indians rather than by one like myself, who has thrown in his lot entirely with the masses, and who has fundamental differences with the mind of educated India as a body. I still want to act upon them, but not by leading the Congress; on the contrary, by working my way to their hearts silently so far as possible, even as I did between 1915 and 1919. I recognize the great services rendered to the country by educated India in the face of tremendous odds. It has got its own method of work; it has its own place in the national life. I cannot be blind to the fact that, no matter what may be said to the contrary, the disciplined resistance of the Swaraj Party has made its impression upon the rulers. The best way in which I can help that activity is by removing myself out of the way and by concentrating myself solely upon constructive work with the help of the Congress and in its name and that, too, only so far as educated Indians will permit me to do so.

I recognize that it is educated India which is to set the pace in the Congress, not I and those who have ceased to think politically for the time being. In my opinion, both have a place in the national evolution. And each group remaining in its own sphere can complement and help the activity of the other. I pin my faith to the spinning-wheel and khaddar. It is a programme which can absorb the energies of the most advanced youths of the country. It is an effort which demands the exclusive attention, not of one man, but of hundreds, indeed thousands, of men and women. I do not want to engage in disputations about the necessity or the utility of the spinning-wheel and khaddar. Time has come for working out the propositions I have advanced in behalf of

khaddar, and in working them out I want the goodwill and co-operation of all who will extend them to the movement, and this is possible only by removing the spinning-wheel from the arena of Congress politics. The spinning-wheel and khaddar will, therefore, retain that place in the Congress which may be freely given to them by the politically-minded countrymen. If my advice is, therefore, accepted by the All-India Congress Committee, the ban upon political propaganda through the Congress will be entirely removed, and the Swaraj Party will, therefore, then function not through its separate organization, but through the Congress itself, not by virtue of any new pact but by reason of the dissolution of the pact existing between the Party and myself, and consequent amendment of the Congress constitution and of the Congress resolution that gave effect to the pact. The pact threw the door open to the other political parties by suspending non-co-operation. Its dissolution will make the opening wider still inasmuch as the politically-minded people of the country will no longer labour under the handicap of the Congress being confined merely to the constructive programme. They had some hesitation in joining the Swaraj Party, and in their opinon, the Congress did not afford sufficient scope for their energies and talents. But when the ban is removed, they can, if they will, whole-heartedly join the Congress and move any political resolutions that they may desire from the Congress platform, and cross swords with the Swarajists and so act upon them and the country.

The compulsory yarn franchise will no longer hamper them. The only impediment in their way will be the compulsory adoption of khaddar as national wear. But it may be that the All-India Congress Committee will reject even khaddar as part of the franchise. I shall not stand in the way even of such rejection, painful though it will certainly be to me; for, in my opinion, then educated India will cut off the only visible and tangible tie that today binds it to the masses. I shall hope, therefore, that khaddar will find a permanent place in the Congress franchise. Do we not want to encourage cottage industries and handicrafts? Do we not want millions of women who have no work to do, and who will gladly earn a few pice per day, to do so by spinning? Hand-spinning, I understand, is to be retained as a permanent part of the franchise as an alternative. To that I should think there can be no objection. If, therefore, the proposals that I have made are accepted by the All-India Congress Committee, it will become possible for every educated Indian to join the Congress and evolve a united national political programme that will meet the emer-

gency that has arisen both by Deshbandhu's death and Lord Birkenhead's speech.

Young India, 30-7-1925

281. *THE CONGRESS UNEMPLOYED*

Whilst I was discussing with friends the object of the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, certain friends asked, "Why should not the maintenance of dependents of those who are in prison or deported and alleviation of unemployment of Congressmen who are starving by reason of their non-co-operation be one of the objects, if not the object?" The same question has come before me during my stay in Bengal in a variety of ways. In my opinion, it is not possible to raise the fund suggested from all over India and from all parties for such a purpose. So far as the maintenance of the dependents of political prisoners and detenues is concerned, it is a matter that requires most delicate handling and must be left to each province to settle in the manner that may be considered most suitable in that province. I cannot reconcile myself to a permanent fund for that object. My own practical experience in South Africa, and to a limited extent here, has shown me that very often undeserving people get relief and the deserving are left out. A permanent fund for distant contingencies of this nature offers temptation to those who do not mind living on charity. In order to obviate chances of dishonest practices, I had to establish a settlement in South Africa where all those who needed and deserved relief could be accommodated, fed, and looked after. At a single stroke it was possible by this arrangement to save thousands of rupees, to provide for every honest case of distress, to do absolute justice to everyone, to put people in distress in ideal surroundings, to find useful employment for them and to provide education for the children of such families. I suggested a similar course in Chittagong after the great strike in 1921. There is danger of charity being misplaced unless drastic measures as I have suggested be adopted to deal with cases of political imprisonment or detention. The real fight, if it is to come at all on a large scale, is still to come. We shall have to pay a price adequate to the freedom we want and, unless we think out and devise some plan of meeting such contingencies in a reasonable manner, in the struggle for freedom, it is possible for us to be starved into an ignominious surrender. Apart, therefore, from the question of Memorial and on the merits of the case, I am against

any permanent fund for the relief of what may be called political distress.

The question of the Congress unemployed is more urgent and of a permanent character. Although we have resolutions on the subject, hitherto we have been unable to establish an All-India Congress Service or even a Provincial Congress Service, not for want of will but for want of ability. Personally, I have endeavoured to tackle it more than once, but I own I have been baffled. It has not been possible to fix a maximum to be paid nor has it been possible to devise grades of service. Wherever, therefore, it has been sought to establish a system, it has been found necessary to leave well alone and try every case on its merits. It is perhaps not possible as yet to establish a regular service, but I have no doubt that the scale and the system are gradually growing.

There are two branches of constructive activity which absorb the largest number of Congress workers,—khaddar and, to a lesser extent, education. But here again every province will have to be responsible for its own scheme and as it too depends, as a rule, upon local contributions, it is a fairly sound proposition that that Service only deserves to live which obtains local support, because the test of appreciation of service is the support given by those who are served. The very existence of the Congress depends upon the fact that it supplies a local want. It is not like a Government super-imposed and, therefore, independent of the support of those whom it seeks to rule. Both the khaddar and the educational services presuppose continued activity and continued preparation. I have laid it down as a rule for my own guidance that, if neither of these activities has local support, it is due to want of tact or ability on the part of those who are engaged in the respective services. I do not know a single case of starvation of deserving men. I know cases of straitened circumstances of Congress workers eking out an honest but precarious life. But I fear that that will be progressively our lot, and, if in some cases, some of us have not yet reconciled ourselves to the simplicity and severity that have entered into the national life, and if some owing to a long course of habit are even constitutionally unfitted to adopt themselves to the severe simplicity which is expected of them, in any case I hope it is now clear why the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial may not take the form of giving relief to the distressed or finding employment for Congress workers. The present object of the Memorial is calculated indirectly to do both.

Young India, 30-7-1925

282. AGRICULTURE v. KHADDAR

An M.A.,B.L. writes thus:[1]

The question of unemployment raised in this letter I have dealt with elsewhere. But as others besides the correspondent have brought the question of agriculture in connection with khaddar, it might be as well to deal with the appeal of my lawyer correspondent.

Let me first of all point out to him that he is mistaken in thinking that he has merely to get a loan of two thousand rupees to make his proposed agricultural experiment a 'swinging success'. Indeed, agriculture requires just as much application and study as law. The correspondent also seems to labour under the delusion that the message of khaddar is being presented to India in order to clothe the naked. On the contrary, khaddar is intended to serve the same purpose that paddy does. The spinning-wheel will provide additional occupation to the millions, which would mean an additional income wherewith to supplement the insufficient food that they are able to get today.

Agriculture is not a dying occupation in India. It requires reform and improvement. But agricultural reforms are possible under a national government. Individual agricultural effort can leave little impression upon the masses whose sole occupation is agriculture which gives them less than what they need for proper bodily sustenance. If this correspondent is really tired of his profession and wishes to give it up, he must not build castles in the air. He must become an expert spinner and he will find himself engaged, not in spinning for his maintenance, but in the organizations that are being conducted in Bengal for propagating spinning and khaddar.

Young India, 30-7-1925

[1] In his letter, not reproduced here, the correspondent appealed to Gandhiji to raise 100 lacs to finance agriculture and small industries as a solution of the unemployment problem.

283. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

July 30, 1925

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad informs me that the newspaper reports of my speech,[1] before the European Association, the other day, has given rise to a great deal of controversy among the Mussalman friends and even some resentment, because some Mussalman friends read into my speech the view that I could not find an able and honourable Mussalman who could occupy the Mayoral chair, and that the Maulana Sahib also had given me a similar opinion. I have now read the report of my speech from which these deductions have been made. Though it is not a verbatim report, even as it stands, I do not consider that it warrants the deductions that have been drawn from it.

What I said was that, instead of leaving it to those friends who had come to me to judge as to the ability and honesty of any Mohammedan name that might be suggested, if I had known such a one myself, I should have unconditionally recommended his name for adoption.

The Maulana certainly never conveyed to me directly or indirectly, that his recommendation of Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's name was based upon the fact that there was no honest and able Mussalman in the Corporation or outside on whom the distinction could be conferred, but simply suggested a political motive for his recommendation, namely giving as much adventitious aid as possible to the Swaraj Party in the absence of its illustrious Chief. Whatever the interpretation that my speech, as reported, may be capable of, the public will accept my assurance that nothing was more remote from my mind, or that of Maulana Sahib than to think that there was no honest and able Mussalman who could be recommended for the honour. In fact, for me, it would be ludicrous presumption, when I did not sufficiently know any Mussalman in Calcutta except the Maulana, to say that there was no honest and able Mussalman who could occupy the chair. Indeed, if the Maulana Sahib's suggestion had not come to me or, having come, had not appealed to me, I would have continued to prosecute Mr. Suhrawardy's claim as I had come to know something of

[1] *Vide* "Speech at European Association Meeting", 24-7-1925.

his ability, and I was entitled to presume his honesty from his occupation of the chair of the Deputy Mayor.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 31-7-1925

284. LETTER TO "THE STATESMAN"

148, RUSSA ROAD,
July 31, 1925

You will perhaps extend me the courtesy of finding room for a reply to your article headed "Civil Resistance" in today's *Statesman*. You see an inconsistency between my desire to prepare an atmosphere for civil resistance and my statement to the European Association that I was dying for co-operation. My speech before the European Association was delivered on July 24. I write for *Young India* on Saturday for the issue of Thursday following. The reference to civil resistance which you have quoted appears in *Young India* of July 23. I give you the dates in order to show that the idea or preparation for civil resistance was not conceived after the statement to the European Association.

I see no inconsistency between the desire for civil resistance and for co-operation. You will remember that my statement to the European Association was a recalling of an old story. When, in the heyday of non-co-operation, an Englishman twitted me with the remark that, although I professed non-co-operation I was dying to co-operate, I said to him emphatically that I was doing so. And I say that that is my position also today. Civil resistance to wrong is not a new doctrine or practice with me. It is a life-long belief and a life-long practice. To prepare the country for civil resistance is to prepare it for non-violence. To prepare the country for non-violence is to organize it for constructive work which, to me, is synonymous with the spinning-wheel. You evidently seem to think that I have repented of my non-co-operation or civil resistance. I have never done so. I remain a confirmed non-co-operator. If I could carry educated India with me, I would declare non-co-operation in its entirety today. Being a practical man, I recognize the facts that stare me in the face. I have failed to convince some of my most esteemed colleagues that the particular form of non-co-operation which we embarked upon in 1920 can do good to the country at the present moment. It, therefore, remains under suspension. But I cannot hide from you the fact

that, if I could reconvert my colleagues, I would certainly ask the Congress to renew the battle.

Personally, I have no desire to co-operate voluntarily with the Government in my weakness; that would be the co-operation of a slave. I admit my weakness, and, therefore, I remain satisfied with the mere desire for co-operation and I seek to fulfil that desire by developing strength. If I believed in violence, I would make no secret of it and would take the consequences. But I would let the country know publicly, and know in unequivocal terms, that there is no freedom for her and no room for honourable co-operation with the Government, unless she is prepared to match the British bayonet with the Indian. As it is, I do not believe in the creed of the bayonet. I further believe that, fortunately or unfortunately, it will never succeed in India. A substitute for it is, however, necessary and that is civil resistance.

In your opinion it is as dangerous as violence, and if such is also the opinion of the Government, it has to suppress me, for after my discharge from prison, I have not allowed a moment to pass when I have not endeavoured to fit myself or the country for civil resistance. Let me inform you in all humility that, if I could but secure the absolute co-operation of my revolutionary friends by the entire cessation of their activity, and if I could produce an atmosphere of general non-violence, I would declare mass civil resistance today and thus prepare the ground for honourable co-operation. I admit that I failed to do so in 1921, and when I found that Chauri Chaura betrayed me, I had no hesitation within twenty-four hours of the declaration of civil resistance to suspend it, and to take the consequences of a general depression in the country that followed.

And if I insist *ad nauseam* on Hindu-Muslim unity, and the spinning-wheel and khaddar, it is in order to ensure a state of non-violence necessary for civil resistance. I have, I confess, despaired of achieving Hindu-Muslim unity in the very near future. Untouchability is surely but slowly going, the spinning-wheel is surely but slowly making its way. Meanwhile, the ruthless exploitation of the country is proceeding apace. I am, therefore, thinking out plans of some form of effective individual civil resistance which, if it brings no relief to this poor country, will at least bring some solace to those whose creed is non-violence, to know that they have left no stone unturned to help the deliverance of the country from a bondage which is enervating a whole nation.

I confess, again that I have no ready-made plan, for if I had, I would not keep it from you or the country. But I am giving you the whole of the working of my mind. I have no desire to obtain or retain the goodwill of Englishmen under false pretences. Even as the Government abates no precaution or preparation for ensuring its existence and stability, when it may be offering terms to Indian politicians, even so do I want my country to abate no effort to arm itself with a weapon on which she may rely when the Government fails to respond to its wishes.

You may know (for the communication is published) that Deshbandhu did not sign Dr. Besant's manifesto on her Bill, one of the grounds for which was that there was no sanction stipulated for in the event of rejection. That sanction was to be civil resistance. Will you have the country's manhood absolutely paralysed and rendered utterly ineffective for any resistance, violent or non-violent, before the British Government can possibly think of offering any terms or considering proposals that might be made by the Swaraj Party or any other? If so, I assure you, no self-respecting Indian will voluntarily be party to a condition so degrading.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Statesman, 1-8-1925

285. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

July 31, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi, who presided, said that two things were dear to the heart of the deceased patriot, one of which was that he stood, without any mental reservation, out and out for Hindu-Muslim unity. He was also an ardent advocate of swadeshi. The times when Rasul lived were comparatively ancient, and he wished to interpret his message in the spirit of modern times. In the programme that was sketched out for the nation in 1920, both Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi were duly emphasized. But they gave a new meaning to both these two things. They then decided that it was not enough that a few educated Indians should stand shoulder to shoulder, work together, perhaps mix socially also. They then felt the necessity of taking that message to the masses. They had not half done the task. In fact, they had not yet made a beginning. They all wanted Hindu-Muslim unity, but they would not get it by simply talking about it. Then and then

[1] This was held on the eighth anniversary of Abdur Rasul's death, and was held at Albert Hall.

only would Hindu-Muslim unity be established when Hindus would learn to serve the Mohammedans without expecting the slightest reward and Mohammedans would learn to serve Hindus in a similarly disinterested spirit. The new meaning of swadeshi was, not that they should put together the several parts of an article, say a watch or a harmonium, imported from abroad and label it as swadeshi, but their swadeshi now consisted in every part being made in India. They now recognized that the central fact round which swadeshi should revolve was "khaddar". That was the modern dictionary meaning of swadeshi and not until they had done this one thing would they be able to realize the dream that Abdur Rasul dreamt.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had that afternoon seen hundreds of hungry people being fed in front of the Marble Palace in Chor Bagan. The sight was one which was neither ennobling nor honourable to those who had organized the meal for the hungry people of Calcutta from day to day. They did not know what they were doing. They were ignorant of the irreparable harm they were doing to India by this misplaced benevolence. Not one of these men and women who were being fed were incapacitated for work. They had just as strong arms and legs as anyone of them had. Did they think there was any merit in feeding people who could work for their living? He differed from those who considered this as a merit. Let them not be flattered with the testimony that was sometimes ignorantly given by European writers that there were no such things as work-houses in India. These European writers believed that the Indians had a system of feeding the poor and the hungry which was self-organized, and which did away with the necessity of having work-houses. The statement was only partially true, and the system had done no good to India. They were today feeding the idlers. Some of them were thieves and, if this process continued for any length of time, he saw no bright future for this unhappy country. Let them, therefore, beware of this system. He did not introduce this story to criticize the philanthropist. He wished he had their ear, and then he would ask them not to misplace their philanthropy in this way; rather he would ask them to give some work to these men and women. Had they ever paused to enquire why these people were idlers, why millions of people of India were idling away their time? Indians were not a nation of idlers. Had they been so, they would have died long ago. The fact was that there was not enough work for them and therefore this glorious land of theirs, because of their ignorance, because of their want of real patriotism, was throwing out people who could not be sustained on the land. Therefore the remedy lay in finding an occupation for them. And what better occupation could be provided for these millions of men than the spinning-wheel or the charkha. Let the educated community, therefore, spin for at least half an hour if they wanted to remove this degrading poverty of the masses.

Forward, 1-8-1925

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM JOGENDRA SINGH

I feel diffident in writing to you about matters which have been engaging your mind and heart night and day all these years. Indeed, I confess I have hardly any claim to hazard an opinion except that I have been in close touch with life and few people in the political world know the villages, as I do, which make real India. A voice from the villages may be of some use to you in reaching realities.

I had the pleasure of meeting you, in Lahore, many years ago, with Mr. Padshah. We discussed the economics of charkha and power-driven machines. I disagreed with your view. I still feel that human nature in itself is not capable of working above and beyond the surrounding environment and the environment now embraces the whole world; none the less, I admit that if human nature could find illumination for a while, simple living and high thinking point the surest road to happiness. I also see that if men learn to co-operate against things which they dislike and accept self-suffering, they can enforce their will wielding compelling powers without incurring the risk of devastations which follow wars and revolutions.

God entrusted you with a message, a message of freedom based on good-will, ensuring peace; saving civilization from committing *hara-kiri* by exploiting forces of nature without cultivating necessary discipline and moral restraint which from time immemorial has been held essential in the East. Give your message and time will carry it to the hearts of men. The love of your motherland calls you to apply your principles to the pressing problems of the day; you have been even persuaded to permit others to test a policy of pacts and compromises which appeal to the politicians more than the uncompromising pursuit of truth. They have been at it for a long while seeking to weld the people together by an agreed distribution of loaves and fishes and hoping to secure swaraj by constant obstruction in the Legislatures. Failure has been pursuing these efforts from the start. I wonder if the leaders are disenchanted. In any case pursue your own path, it is your dharma. You and they cannot walk the same road for long. The great work before you is to confine yourself to the essentials; prove that non-co-operation is co-operation in essence and stronger than the might of armies, that non-co-operation is co-operation of righteous men to overcome the unrighteous in a spirit of tolerance and good-will, accepting self-suffering to awaken an understanding in the opponents. India needs it, but more than India Europe needs it, and indeed the whole

world needs it. This alone can give the League of Nations strength to enforce its will. This alone can confer power on unarmed nations to assert their manhood and to keep their places in the sun. This alone can dispel darkness which drives nations into wars, in search of supremacy at the sacrifice of protection and peace. The new world waits for this new message; proclaim it with all the power that God has given you.

The problem of food is as important as the problem of peace. When you placed charkha on the banner of your flag you raised the symbol of economic independence of nations great and small. Happiness is not to be found in wild pursuit of pleasure and possessions and unlimited production. These feed the flames of desire. Let each householder produce what he needs and then what he cannot produce let him procure from his neighbour in and outside the bounds of his own land. Let trade be an exchange of things, not wild exploitation by one nation of the other; an organized competition which must fail unless saved by a large-hearted readjustment of economic relations of the world. Let charkha be as a symbol for practical purposes; we must modernize the village bringing electric power to its service, to weave cloth, to pump water, to press oil and to do a thousand other services which some of our congested villages need to secure enough food and clothing. You cannot be altogether unaware that no country can entirely escape the influence of the new age; an age of magic and machinery, ruled by new inventions and human nature. You can place new inventions in the hands of the village worker in his own home, you can transfuse a divine sense of service to elevate human nature. You can inculcate ethics of work, love and labour by reviving the system of *kathas,* to keep alive ideals and traditions which have saved India through centuries of unfavouring circumstances.

The great problem you have set your hand to is to bring harmony between Hindus and Mussalmans. I am sure you will not exclude Englishmen from this great concord of hearts and minds. I fear you have been exploring the possibilities of pacts and political arrangement against your better reason and agreed to let your friends try the methods with which they are familiar. They have failed and you can now turn round and tell them to let you go your own way. You may not be followed today but truth shall conquer. Light up the flame of understanding by your example transfiguring unity by living it. No one can do more. Hindus and Mussalmans who have their eye on the main chance repeat the creed without conviction. They will never find unity. They want places of power. Leave them in the old familiar caves, dark with the darkness of ages. Turn to the villages, unity exists there already. Factors which work discords can be examined and removed—fetishes which have usurped the sanction of religion. Remove untouchability between Hindus and Mussalmans in the matter of food, give freedom to the Mussalmans to sacrifice cows if they so desire, open the Hindu temples to the Mussalmans to desecrate if they dare. When doors are flung open to them as friends

allow them to carry their processions wherever they like and to cut the *peepul* trees. Let the Hindus not only tolerate but join these processions and let the Mussalmans also do the same—allow the Hindus to blow their conches and unfurl their flag remembering in the words of Iqbal: "They are both companions on the long road and the night has overtaken them both."

Do this and rest will follow. This work has to be done in the villages, in the temples and the mosques and in the towns, wherever men of greater goodwill can be found. Let the order go forth that "We shall fight no more over these things and that Hindus shall open their temples and the Mussalmans their mosques and partake freely in each other's festivals."

The political problem is certainly important but more important is the serving of the needs of the people. There is a ploughing season and a sowing season and a harvesting season. A bad agriculturist ploughs his land badly, sows his seed and weeps when he turns to gather a harvest. A good agriculturist ploughs patiently and ploughs again and again and secures a rich harvest. We are still in the ploughing season. We need better education, more food, better houses and a larger coming together of races and creeds. The true worker never hurries. Modern methods made fully subservient to man and kept under control can add greatly to the production of the soil and the making of a better man morally and physically. Do something towards this. Make electric power the servant of man in the hearth and home and the fields outside, helping every man to attain his manhood. Preach your doctrine of love and self-determination and freedom. Man is the master of his own destiny and in his realization all immediate problems will find an easy solution. I have made suggestions not that I know more but only because it may help you to know what people need. Politics often have a trick of wrapping truth in a veil of mystery and giving to what is temporary and unimportant preference over the permanent and deeply important.

Young India, 25-6-1925

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM B. C CHATTERJEE

Sir,

Your recent pronouncement that Deshbandhu's Faridpur speech is to be the basis of future action has struck a vibrant note of hope and inspiration. For one cannot but read into it an open invitation on your part to all the country's workers to reunite on a common platform. The Presidential speech at the Faridpur Conference had this great end transparently in view. Your endorsement of that speech could only signify your acceptance of that end. Let me be a little clearer. Deshbandhu left none in doubt about his considered opinion that the country would be well-advised to subscribe to the Reforms in

the event of the Government carrying through the recommendations of the minority of the Muddiman Committee, and enlarging the men detained under the Bengal Ordinance. By this one declaration he cut away the real ground of difference between the Swaraj Party and the other political groups. The Liberal Party as a whole, and, indeed, all believers in the Reforms who have not ceased to respect themselves or their country are bound in honour to stand away from the Montagu-Chelmsford dispensation, unless and until Government have given legislative effect to the minority report embodying, as it does, the practical experience of those who have so finely faced unpopularity in making an honest effort to work the Reforms. And, in the next place, no Indian worth the name could think of offering co-operation to Great Britain on the basis of her sufferance of measures like the Bengal Ordinance. In the name of every Indian Nationalist who has rendered you the homage of his heart in spite of differences of opinion, I conjure you with all my soul's prayer and passion to tell the country with that explicitness, which is of your essence, whether you will or will not subscribe to the Reforms if Government do actually carry out the Deshbandhu's twofold suggestion.

Your answer in the affirmative would be the opening of a new—and may I beg leave to add?—a greater chapter in the history of your personality, and of India's destiny. It would mean a gathering of all India under your banner, the taking of a fresh oath of allegiance to your cause by the Swarajists, the Liberal and the Nationalist alike, by all the children of the mother in fact, if one may only leave out those who are ready to leave their brothers just for a handful of silver or a bit of ribbon to stick in their coat. Such men have not counted in history, nor ever shall. You would clear the issue, by your single promulgation, between Great Britain and a united India—the issue of on which side the spirit of sincerity abides on the question of responsible Government for India. Does Great Britain really mean to advance India on the road to responsible government, or is she out merely to confer favours on the henchmen and pick-thanks? That is the question you shall ask from the platform of the coming Congress that shall have been reunited by reason of your reaffirmation of Deshbandhu's parting message of Faridpur. The test of Great Britain's sincerity shall be in her readiness, to respond to the demand of a united India for the removal of the minor obstacles barring the way of the Minister, and the release of the men detained without trial. And that of our people under your leadership shall consist in their whole-hearted co-operation in the cause of the Reforms after England has acquiesced in India's twin demand.

Pray, do not listen to the man who will prattle of prestige. I can almost hear the muttered protest of numbers of your followers calling upon you to desist from lowering your prestige by going out to make an offer to England. But my faith in you bids me to feel sure that considerations of prestige—that moral curse of a country ridden by snobbery—never can and never shall

strangle the straightforwardness of your course of life. I would conclude with my final appeal to you to offer Great Britain this chance of proving her sincerity and India this chance of achieving her unity.

B. C. CHATTERJEE

Young India, 9-7-1925

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM W. H. PITT

July 22, 1925

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I was in the midst of a long letter to you when the post arrived with your letter of the 16th instant for which I thank you. It was very kind of you amidst your many important engagements in Bengal to find time to write to me.

1. I had already received a copy of your telegram to Mr. Kelappan Nair advising him to picket the eastern gate only of Vaikom temple and it was on this subject that I am writing to you. My belief was that you had misunderstood the position and my suggestion, but from your letter I see that your advice was given after full consideration of the facts then before you and for reasons that appeared to you to be adequate.

2. With regard to an unequivocal declaration by Government on the subject of roads which you would like to see you are probably not aware that there is already a Royal Proclamation, having the force of law, in Travancore declaring all public roads to be open to all subjects of His Highness the Maharajah. It is questionable whether it is capable of extension or has ever been authoritatively interpreted by the law-courts. The diehards of the orthodox party are now talking of seeking an injunction from the courts restraining the *avarna* Hindus from using any of the roads round Vaikom temple. If they do so, I believe they will fail and the whole question will be settled once for all. However this may be, so far as my information goes, there is no prospect of another Proclamation being issued. Personally I do not think one necessary.

3. There is one point that I have not yet mentioned to you, but which deserves your consideration. The authorities in Travancore are bound to see that the customary pujas and ceremonies connected with the State religion proceed uninterruptedly and are duly performed. In fact, certain officers have pledged their word that if innovations are permitted with regard to the use of temple roads, these will not interfere with public worship. At the present moment some difficulty is being experienced in redeeming this pledge and in fact it has not been altogether redeemed. Given time, the authorities will

overcome all difficulties but they have to be cautious and examine the ground before advancing.

There can be no question of taking any action that will lead to a general interruption of public worship. The fight of your volunteers on the eastern road alarms even those orthodox Hindus who have agreed to the advance already made and the authorities are embarrassed by this silent threat from you to penetrate to the eastern gate. That you will get there is to most people, a foregone conclusion but this is not the moment to press forward or even to threaten an advance.

I have no hesitation in stating positively that the picketing of the eastern road is extremely detrimental to your cause and I say with confidence that in making this statement I am supported by a majority of the local democrats and all the *avarna* Hindu leaders. The authorities require a calm atmosphere in which to deal with those orthodox Hindus who fear that their religion or perhaps their community's interests are in danger and everything that tends to disrupt the atmosphere retards further advance. I appreciate your point that principle and discipline demand that the volunteers should not withdraw, but I am doubtful whether the morale of a handful of volunteers ought to be set above the interests of 2,000,000 *avarna* Hindus. I therefore put it to you (i) that the picketing of the eastern road is a source of embarrassment to the authorities in pacifying the orthodox Hindus; (ii) that the authorities cannot and will not advance further without carrying the vast majority of Hindus with them; (iii) that the advance will be quicker if you withdraw and I would ask you kindly to consider whether if you still think it necessary to occupy the local *Ruhr*, you cannot withdraw the standing picket and abstain from all demonstrations against the eastern gate of the temple.

Mr. R. Krishna Pillai, Devaswom Commissioner, is engaged in negotiations with the orthodox Hindus at other places having temples and is confident, if left in peace, of being able to induce them to abandon any claim they may have to the exclusive use of, at any rate, roads of general public utility.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11099

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM K. KELAPPAN NAIR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
VAIKOM,
June 18, 1925

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

The first class Magistrate, the Asstt. Supdt. of Police and the Devaswom officials are come here ready to open tomorrow just half the roads in question (*vide* the plan enclosed)[1], if I would thereupon stop satyagraha. We cannot accept this solution which is no solution at all. We never had any fascination for these Vaikom temple roads. We fought to establish a principle. Our contention was no man should be excluded from the use of public roads on the ground that he is an unapproachable. The Govt. by shutting them out from the use of half of the roads, in fact perpetuates the contention that certain public roads ought to be closed against certain individuals on the ground that they belong to a particular caste. If we stop the satyagraha it would mean that we acquiesce in the old principle which the Travancore Govt. newly enunciates. We certainly cannot do that. I therefore said that I could not abandon the fight.

The cure is worse than the disease. Till now we could at least give the people the hope that we shall succeed in the end. If we stop satyagraha now we cannot face the people holding our heads erect. Why is the eastern road not open? Not because the *savarnas* who opposed our entry into any of those roads are agreeable to this arrangement. If three roads are to be opened in spite of them they do not at all mind if the fourth road is also opened. Then why has the Government adopted this stupid course which satisfies no party? I cannot find any conceivable reason for it except that the Govt. also uphold unapproachability. If it be that the priests will not perform puja they have already secured better men from the point of view of their learning, to perform puja in case the present men strike. The Government could not have conceived of a more silly solution.

We shall have failed deplorably in the eyes of the people if we abandon the fight in these circumstances. Please advise me what to do.

Awaiting your reply by wire,

Yours obediently,
K. KELAPPAN

PS.

Today I have also sent to you a telegram for your instructions.

From a photostat: S.N. 11093

[1] Not reproduced here

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM MOTILAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
July 21, 1925

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

The Swaraj Party is under a deep debt of gratitude to you for your generous support on the irreparable loss it sustained by the premature death of its great leader, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. You have now redoubled that debt by the noble offer contained in your letter of the 19th July. It seems to me that the only way to repay that debt is to accept your offer in all humility and strive with your help to meet the situation created by Lord Birkenhead's speech in the spirit of the last pronouncement of Deshbandhu made at Faridpur.

Lord Birkenhead seems to have spurned the honourable co-operation offered by Deshbandhu and to have made it clear that in our struggle for freedom we have still to face many unnecessary obstacles and many ill-informed opponents. Our plain duty at this stage is, therefore, to go ahead along the line chalked out for us and prepare the country for an effective challenge to irresponsible and insolent authority. In the words of the great Faridpur speech "We shall fight, but fight clean, not forgetting that when the time for settlement comes, as it is bound to come, we have to enter the Peace Conference not in a spirit of arrogance but with becoming humility, so that it may be said of us that we were greater in our achievement than in our adversity." You have now enabled us to fulfil the message of Deshbandhu with the unite 'strength of the Congress at our back. Under such auspices we need entertain no misgivings about the result which can only be what it has invariably been in all ages and countries: the ultimate triumph of right over might.

I desire to say one word about the Pact from which you have so generously absolved the Swaraj Party. As you know, both Deshbandhu and I had no desire to have the conditions of the Pact altered in the course of the year. We wanted to give it a full and fair trial and it was our wish to help personally in every way in making it a success. Ill-health and many preoccupations prevented us both from doing as much for it as we had wished, but I entirely agree with you that a new situation has been created by recent events and under the circumstances the Congress should without loss of time adapt itself to this situation by making itself a predominantly political body. I therefore, welcome your offer. This, however, does not mean that the Congress should give up in any way the constructive programme. All our efforts

would be of little avail if they are not backed up by the organized strength of the nation.

We shall now go ahead in full confidence with our work inside the Councils and outside in the country and if the occasion demands organized action in the country I need not assure you that the Swaraj Party will whole-heartedly help in such activity.

Yours sincerely,
MOTILAL NEHRU

Young India, 23-7-1925

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM MADELEINE SLADE

63, BEDFORD GARDENS,
CAMPDEN HILL,
LONDON, W. 8

PARIS
May 29, 1925

MOST DEAR MASTER,

I thank you profoundly for having answered my first letter to you—I had never dared to hope such a thing! I have eagerly taken to heart all you said, and I now venture to write to you again, my year of self-imposed trial being more than half over.

The first impulse has never faded, but on the contrary my desire to serve you has grown ever more and more fervent. It is impossible to express in words the greatness of the inspiration which impels me but I pray God with all my heart that I may be able to give expression to my love in work —in acts. However humble they may be they will at least be utterly sincere.

And now I want to put before you my *most earnest request*:

May I come to your Ashram to study spinning and weaving, to learn to live your ideals and principles in daily life, and indeed to learn in what way I may hope to serve you in the future? In order to become a fit servant of your cause I feel the absolute necessity of that training and I will do my very best to be a not too unworthy pupil if you will accept me!

In the meantime I continue my preparations as best I can. I spin and weave (only with wool, nobody seeming to know about the management of cotton in France or England). With the aid of many kind Indian friends I perplex my head over long Hindustani exercises I read. What a revelation is that reading! The more I enter into Indian thought, the more I feel as if I were reaching at last, a long lost home.

In matters of daily life I simplify as much as is possible under present circumstances. I have given up the drinking of all wines, beers or spirits, and I no longer eat meat of any kind.

My being is filled with a great joy and a great anguish. The joy of giving all I have to you and to your people and the anguish of being able to give so little.

I pine for the day when I shall come to India. Alas, there are still five months to wait! I reach Bombay on November 6th, and if I am permitted to join the Ashram I will take the train that evening arriving at Ahmedabad the next morning.

Dear Master, may I come?

Please do not think of troubling to reply to this letter yourself, but perhaps you could send me a word of answer through someone else.

Ever your humble and most devoted servant,

MADELEINE SLADE

PS.

Enclosed are two little samples of wool which I have spun.

From a photostat: S.N. 10541

SOURCES

Aaj : Hindi daily published from Varanasi.

Amrita Bazar Patrika : English newspaper of Calcutta which first appeared as a Bengali weekly in 1868; a daily since 1891.

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne (Gujarati) : Ed. Manibehn Patel, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1957.

Bapuni Prasadi (Gujarati) : Tr. Mathuradas Trikumji, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1948.

(*The*) *Bombay Chronicle* : English daily published from Bombay.

Forward : English daily started by C.R. Das in Calcutta.

Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, New Delhi : Central Museum and Library of Gandhian Literature and documents; *vide* Volume I, p. 349.

(*The*) *Hindu* : English newspaper issued from Madras; started as a weekly in 1878, became a tri-weekly in 1883 and a daily since 1889.

(*The*) *Hindustan Times* : English newspaper published from Delhi.

The Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary : Kept in Swarajya Ashram, Bardoli.

Navajivan (1919-31) : Gujarati weekly (with occasional bi-weekly issues) edited by Gandhiji and published from Ahmedabad; first issued on September 7, 1919. It was converted from *Navajivan ane Satya*, Gujarati monthly (1915-1919). Also issued in Hindi from August 19, 1921.

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya : Library and records containing documents relating to Gandhiji's South African period and Indian period up to 1933; *vide* Vol. I, p. 349.

(*The*) *Searchlight* : English daily published from Patna.

(*The*) *Statesman* : English daily of Calcutta, in publication since 1875 and issued from 1877 as incorporating and directly descended from the *Friends of India*, founded in 1818.

Young India (1918-31) : English weekly founded by Jamnadas Dwarkadas at Bombay; from May 7, 1919, published bi-weekly under Gandhiji's supervision; from October, 1919, issued as a weekly from Ahmedabad with Gandhiji as Editor.

CHRONOLOGY

(*May 1 – July 31, 1925*)

May 1: Gandhiji arrived in Calcutta.
Gave interview to Associated Press of India.
Spoke at public meeting in Mirzapur Park.

May 2: Inaugurated Industrial Exhibition at Faridpur.
Addressed All-India Hindu Sammelan.
Spoke at Bengal Provincial Young Men's Conference.

May 3: Addressed conference of Muslims.
Received addresses from students and Faridpur Municipal Corporation.
Spoke at Bengal Provincial Conference, presided over by C. R. Das.

May 4: Attended Provincial Conference at Faridpur.

May 5: Visited Prabartak Ashram, Chandernagore.

May 6: Called on Sir Surendranath Banerjea.
Laid foundation-stone of Ashtanga Ayurveda Vidyalaya Hospital building.

May 7: Greeted Tagore on birthday eve.
Presided over Buddha Jayanti function at Buddh Vihara, Calcutta.
Started on tour of East Bengal.

May 8: Spoke at Lohagunj (Dacca) and received purse of Rs. 5,000/-.
Addressed public meeting at Malikanda.

May 9: Visited National School at Dighirpur. Received address from Union Board at public meeting.
Addressed workers at Taltola.
Spoke at Malkhanagar.
Gave interview to Associated Press of India.

May 10: Addressed Merchants' Association, Puranbazar.
Received addresses and spoke at public meetings at Chandpur. Visited National School, Chandpur.

Before *May 12*: In interview to Hardayal Nag, denied differences on basic issues with Swarajists.

May 12: Arrived at Chittagong in the morning.
Spoke at public meeting.

May 13: Addressed students' and traders' meetings.
Lord Meston was elected Chairman of the Joint Indian Committee of both Houses of British Parliament.

May 14: At Noakhali, Gandhiji addressed public and women's meetings.
Gave interview to deputation of teachers.

May 15: At Comilla, received addresses at public meeting; addressed students.
Visited Abhoy Ashram, Comilla.
Spoke to workers of Vikrampur; declared himself against formation of organization separate from Congress.

May 16: Spoke at women's meeting, Comilla.

May 17: At public meeting, Dacca, urged people to conduct their business in mother tongue or Hindi.
Laid foundation-stone of National College Hospital at Shyampur.

May 19: At Mymensingh, addressed meeting of women.
Spoke at meeting held in Maharaja's palace.
Addressed gathering of zamindars.

May 21: At Dinajpur, advised untouchables not to get restive about their condition.
Addressed public meeting.
Spoke to students.
Gave interview to local landholders.

May 22: Spoke at workers' school, Bogra.
Addressed public meeting.
At Taloda, visited P. C. Ray's khadi centre.

May 25: In message to *Forward*, emphasized need to advance the spinning-wheel programme.

May 28: Back in Calcutta, exhorted youth to visit villages and work with masses.

May 29: Arrived at Bolpur; drove to Santiniketan.

May 30: Met Tagore; explained charkha and khaddar programme.

May 31: Spoke to students of Santiniketan.
Discussed Anglo-Indian question with Dr. Moreno.

June 3: Arrived in Darjeeling; stayed with C. R. Das.

June 6: Spoke to missionary women at Darjeeling.

June 10: At Jalpaiguri, exhorted merchants and businessmen to utilize their wealth and talent for country's welfare.

June 11: Spoke to students at Nawabganj.

June 12: Visited Bijhari school at Upashi (Dist. Nawabganj). At Bhojeswar, addressed meeting.

June 13: Addressed public meeting, visited Public Library at Madaripur.

June 14: At Barisal addressed public meeting.
Visited Oxford Mission weaving shed; said the only supplementary occupation could be spinning, not weaving.

June 16: C. R. Das died at Darjeeling.

June 17: Gandhiji received at Khulna news of Das's death. Paid tribute to C. R. Das at public meeting.

June 18: Attended C. R. Das's funeral in Calcutta.

June 22: Issued appeal for Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

June 23: Attended meeting at Municipal Market, Calcutta. Gave interviews to *The Statesman* and *The Searchlight.*

June 24: In interview to *The Englishman* denied rift in Swaraj Party. Declared intention to stay in Calcutta a month longer.

June 26: Presided at Gujarati residents' meeting to mourn the death of Das.

June 28: Appealed through *Navajivan* for meetings throughout country on July 1, the *Shraddha* Day of Das, and for taking the spinning pledge.

June 30: Presided over condolence meeting at University Institute, Calcutta.
Principal S. K. Rudra died.

July 1: Gandhiji attended *shraddha* rites of Das.
Spoke at public meeting; at women's meeting received gold bangles and cash for Das Memorial Fund.

July 2: *Bakr-Id* day riots broke out in Kidderpore, Calcutta.
Gandhiji, with Abul Kalam Azad, visited trouble spots, pacified both communities.
In interview to Associated Press of India, put blame on Hindus.

July 4: Visited Indian Institute at Kharagpur; later addressed mammoth meeting at Indian Recreation Ground, pleaded for Hindu-Muslim unity.

July 5: Resumed publishing his *History of Satyagraha in South Africa* in *Navajivan*, interrupted because of fast and other reasons.

July 7: At Midnapur, addressed students', women's and public meetings.

July 9: At Swarajist Councillors' meeting, urged J. M. Sen Gupta's election as Mayor.

July 12: At Rajshahi, visited Public Library, addressed public meeting.

July 16: Spoke at Swaraj Party General Council meeting attended by Motilal Nehru and others.

July 17: At Swaraj Party General Council meeting said if Swarajists insisted on abolition of spinning franchise he would accede to the demand but would resign from Congress Presidentship.

July 19: Wrote to Motilal Nehru, personally absolving him from Belgaum Pact.

Before *July 24:* Addressing Marwari Agarwal Conference at Calcutta, deprecated child-marriage.

July 24: Spoke at the University Institute meeting on Kristodas Pal's death anniversary.
Addressed European Association meeting at Grand Hotel, Calcutta.

July 27: In message to *Forward* commended spinning and khaddar to honour the memory of Lokamanya Tilak.

July 28: Addressed Christian missionaries at Y.M.C.A., Calcutta.

July 29: Spoke at meeting of Anglo-Indians at Wellesley Square.

July 31: Spoke at Calcutta public meeting.

INDEX OF TITLES

About *Antyajas*, 231-2
Acknowledgment of Subscriptions, 279-80
Advice to Hindus, 330
Agriculture *v.* Khaddar, 460
All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, 425-7
(An) All-India Memorial, 400-1
(An) Appeal: 248-9; for All-Bengal Deshbandhu Fund, 440-1; for All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, 402-3; for Contributions to Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, 314-5; for Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, 275-6, 276-7; regarding Deshbandhu Memorial Service, 296
Are We Ready?, 257-9
At Darjeeling, 354-61
At It again, 48-52
Ayurvedic System, 221-3
Bengal Notes, 54-60
Bengal's Sacrifice, 146-7
Calcutta's Mayor, 377-80
Chance of Peace, 351-2
Chittaranjan Das, 267-70
Comments on a Letter, 242-4
Congress and Political Parties, 455-8
(The) Congress Unemployed, 458-9
Cow-protection, 18-9, 46-7
(A) Deceptive Speech, 389-91
Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, 327-8
Difficult Situations, 332-5
(A) Domestic Chapter, 259-62
(The) Drawbacks, 159-61
Duty of Satyagrahis, 293
Entering Villages, 177-8
Entry in Visitors' Book, 370
Experiment in Kathiawar, 301
Fallen Sisters, 290-1
First of July, 297-8
Flood Relief, 199-201
Fruit of Suppression, 407
Ganga-swarup Basanti Devi, 306-10
(The) Great Bereavement, 249
Gurdwara Legislation, 361-2
In Bengal, 209-13
Interview: at Dinajpur, 141-3; to Associated Press of India, 3-4, 71; to (*The*) *Englishman*, 282; to Moreno, Dr. H. W. D., 182-5; to Nag, Hardayal, 80-7; to (*The*) *Searchlight*, 281; to (*The*) *Statesman*, 1-3, 280-1; to Teachers at Noakhali, 98-9; with a Friend, 103-5; with Tagore, Rabindranath, 172-3
Invasion in the Name of Religion, 206-9
Khadi (Khaddar) in: Karnatak, 93; Kathiawar, 213-4
Khadi Pratishthan, 190-2, 368-9
Learning and Enjoying, 335-6
Letter to: Ali, Mahomed, 124-5; Ali, Shaukat, 403-4, 441; Andrews, C. F., 96, 310-1; Bajaj, Jamnalal, 171-2, 224, 312; Besant, Annie,—draft of, 201-2; Bose, Sarat Chandra, 241-2; Campbell, Fred E., 433-4; Chandiwala, Brijkrishna, 26, 77; Chaturvedi, Benarsidas, 429; Das, C. R., 229-30; Desai, Mahadev, 339, 340, 361; (The) Editor, *The World*, 214; Gandhi, Devdas, 119, 311, 399; Gandhi, Maganlal, 73; Gandhi, Narandas, 203, 278-9; Kelkar, N. C., 156; Ketkar, G. V., 88; Krishnadas, 404; Kundu, Nishithnath, 202,

405; Kusary, Jitendranath, 186; Maharaja of Burdwan, 294; Mahendra Pratap, Raja, 239; Mathuradas Trikumji, 125; Mehta, Kalyanji, 145-6; Mirbel, Antoinette, 241; Nair, K. Kelappan, 432-3; Nehru, Motilal, 240, 398; Pandit, Vasumati, 96-7, 224-5, 278, 371; Parekh, Devchand, 179-80, 277; Patel, Manibehn, 97, 180, 226-7, 312, 386; Pitt, W. H., 385-6, 431; (the) Press, 267; Purushottamdas Thakurdas, 170; Qureshi, Shuaib, 294; Rajagopalachari, C., 384-5, 432; Rajendra Prasad, 399-400; Rao, D. Hanumant, 430; Slade, Madeleine, 414-5; (*The*) *Statesman*, 462-4; Subba Rao, G. V., 185; Tagore, Rabindranath, 60, 124; Vaze, S. A., 186-7; Venkatappayya, Konda, 415-6
Long Live Deshbandhu!, 263-6, 302-6
Message to: *Forward*, 155, 429; the People, 1
Miscellaneous, 427-8
My Duty, 236-8, 421-4
My Incapacity, 320-3
My Notes, 19-25, 116-9, 148-50, 173-6, 336-9, 369-70, 392-4
National Education, 397-8
National Service and Pay, 161-2
Need for Protection, 270-2
Needless Expenditure, 151-5
Not Man's Work?, 219-21
Not Two Races, 352-3
(A) Note of Advice, 214
Notes, 52-3, 94-6, 136-9, 156-8, 162-8, 193-8, 216-9, 252-7, 283-8, 323-7, 343-6, 380-3, 408-11, 449-55
'On the Verge of It', 131-5
Painfully Illuminating, 346-8
(A) Plea for: Humility, 288-90; Truth, 373-5
Power of *Ramanama*, 107-12
Purifying Flame, 273-5
Raining Bangles, 329
(A) Remarkable Address, 128-31
Remarks: at National School, Dighirpur, 66; in Visitors' Book, 225-6; to Strong, Father, 239
Reminiscences of Bengal, 36-41
(To) Remove a Misgiving, 383-4
Reply (-ies) to: Address, 16-8; Civic Addresses, Faridpur, 26-7; Questionnaire, 372-3; Welcome Address, Comilla, 101-2; Women's Address, Noakhali, 99
Resolutions at Swaraj Party Meeting, 386-7
Ryots' Cry, 158-9
'(The) Science of Surrender', 348-50
(A) Silent Servant, 350-1
Some Memories, 298-301
Speech: (at) All-Bengal Hindu Sammelan, 10-1; (at) Ashtanga Ayurveda Vidyalaya, 43-6; (at) Bengal Provincial Conference, Faridpur, 27-35; (at) Bengal Provincial Young Men's Conference, 11-2; (at) Bhowanipur, Calcutta, 187; (at) Buddha Birth Anniversary, 61-4; (at) Civic Reception, Chandpur, 74-6; (at) Condolence Meeting, Calcutta, 295; (at) European Association Meeting, 418-21; (at) Industrial Exhibition, Faridpur, 9; (at) Khadi Workers' Meeting, Taltola, 67-8; (at) Lohogunj, 64-5; at Malikanda, 65; (at) Malkhanagar, 69-71; (at) Marwari Agrawal Conference, Calcutta, 411-4; (at) Meeting of Anglo-Indians, 442-9, —Missionaries, 434-9; (at)

Merchants' Association, Puranbazar, 74; (at) Mymensingh, 126-7; (at) National College, Shyampur, 123-4; (at) National School, Chandpur, 76; (on) Pal, Kristodas, 416-8; (at) Prabartak Ashram, Chandernagore, 41-2; (at) Public Library, Madaripur, 230-1; (at) Public Meeting, Bankura, 342, —Barisal, 238-9, —Bhojeswar, 228, —Bogra, 144, —Calcutta, 4-9, 168-70, 464-5, —Chandpur, 76-7, —Chittagong, 88-91, —Comilla, 99-100, —Dacca, 120-2, —Dighirpur, 66-7, —Dinajpur, 140, —Jalpaiguri, 215, —Kharagpur, 332, —Khulna, 249-52, —Madaripur, 230, —Noakhali, 97-8, —Rajshahi, 370-1; (at) Santiniketan, 181; (on the) *Shraddha* Day of C. R. Das, 315-8; (to) Students, 100-1, —Chittagong, 92, —Dinajpur, 141, —Midnapur, 341-2, —Nawabganj, 225; (at) Swaraj Party Meeting, 387-8, 388; (at) Swarajist Councillors' Meeting, Calcutta, 353-4; (at) Taloda, 145; (at) Traders' Meeting, Chittagong, 93; (at) University Institute, Calcutta, 313-4; (to) Untouchables, Dinajpur, 140; (at) Women's Meeting, Comilla, 107, —Mymensingh, 125-6; (to) Women Missionaries, 203-6; (at) Workers' School, Bogra, 143-4

(The) Spinning Franchise, 405-7

Spinning in Bengal, 178-9

Statement to: Associated Press of India, 330-2; (the) Press, 461-2

Stop Publishing *Navajivan*, 364-7

(A) String of Questions, 318-20

Suggestion for Memorial Service, 266

(Sir) Surendranath Banerjea, 113-5

Talk(s): to a Muslim Friend, 106; to Students at Dacca, 122-3; to Volunteers, Jalpaiguri, 215; to Workers of Vikrampur, 102-3; to Zamindars at Mymensingh, 128; with Untouchables, 12-6

Telegram to: Ali, Mahomed, 245; Ali, Shaukat, 247; Das, Basanti Devi, 245; Das, Mona, 246; Naidu, Sarojini, 247; Nair, K. Kelappan, 262; Nehru, Motilal, 262; Patel, Vallabhbhai, 247; Roy, Satcouripati, 245-6; Rudra, S. K., 282; Rudra, Sudhir, 313; Satyagraha Ashram, Vykom, 248; Urmila Devi, 246

This Is Self-control under Compulsion, 362-4

Three Questions, 292-3

Untouchable Saint Nanda, 72-3

Virtues of a Volunteer, 233-6

Vykom, 187-90

When Can We Rise?, 394-6

What Is Tammany Hall?, 375-7

Who Is to Blame?, 310

(A) Worker's Difficulty, 78-9

INDEX

ABDUL HAKIM, Maulvi, 279

AHIMSA, *see* NON-VIOLENCE

AKALI MOVEMENT, 361

ALI BROTHERS, 64, 67, 74, 76, 88, 97, 100, 126, 161, 162, 195, 239, 240, 269, 351. *See* also ALI, Mahomed and ALI, Shaukat.

ALI, Mahomed, 26, 100, 122, 124, 145, 162, 163, 245, 258, 269, 285, 348, 403. *See* also ALI BROTHERS.

ALI, Shaukat, 17, 100, 122, 145, 163, 247, 401, 403, 441. *See* also ALI BROTHERS.

ALL-BENGAL DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND, 323, 383, 402; appeal for, 440-1

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION, 18, 46, 253

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU CHARKHA MEMORIAL, *see* ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND·

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND, 266, 275 to 277, 279, 294 to 296, 314, 323, 327, 328, 332, 337-8, 341, 342, 370, 377, 380, 382, 383, 400 to 403, 425 to 427, 449, 454, 458, 459

ALL-INDIA KHADI BOARD, 117, 118, 218, 369. *See* also ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION.

ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL SERVICE, *see* ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION, 102, 405, 406, 450-1

ALWAR ATROCITIES, 408

ANAND, 125

ANANDANAND, Swami, 312

ANANDJI HARI DAS, 295

ANDREWS, C.F., 17, 60, 96, 282, 285, 310, 326, 351, 401, 439

ANEY, 172

ANGLO-INDIANS, 182 to 185, 189, 190, 264, 409, 410, 442 to 449

ANIL BABU, 342

ANSARI, Dr. M.A., 162, 240

Antyaja(s), 16, 21, 231, 232, 235; schools for, in Karachi, 174; working for the uplift of, 17

APARNA DEVI, 11, 410

ARJUNA, 50, 51, 316

ARJUNLAL, 172

ARNOLD, Sir Edwin, 62

ASAR, Lakshmidas, 368

ASHTANGA AYURVEDA VIDYALAYA, 43, 221

AYURVEDIC SYSTEM, 221-3

AZAD, Abul Kalam, 330, 331, 401, 419, 461

BAJAJ, Jamnalal, 104, 171, 224, 312, 401, 404, 408, 426, 427

BAL GANGADHAR, 311

BALKRISHNA, 311

BANERJEA, Sir Surendranath, 58, 59, 113 to 115, 120, 183, 195, 257, 305, 355

BANERJEE, Gurudas, 289

BANERJEE, Kali Charan, 435

BANKER, Shakerlal Ghelabhai, 37, 104, 336, 404

BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, 27

BESANT, Dr. Annie, 31, 201, 357, 390, 407, 447, 464

BEYER, 186

Bhagavad Gita, 50, 88, 212, 236, 274, 289, 315 to 317, 322, 347,

391, 435; definition of Kshatriya in, 51
Bhagavata, 236, 274
BHARUCHA, B.F., 93, 257, 401, 449
BHISHMA, 333
BHOMBAL, 246, 309
BHORLAL, 229
BIBLE, 174, 204, 205, 435
BIRKENHEAD, Lord, 3, 5, 35, 281, 358, 360, 387, 389 to 391, 398, 407, 416, 447, 448, 458; talks between Lord Reading and, 373
BISWAS, Surendra, 38 to 40
BISWAS, Suresh, 58
BLAIR, Mrs., 252
BONNERJEE, W.C., 252
BOSE, Rai A.N., 279
BOSE, Sarat Chandra, 241, 401
BOSE, Satyanand, 401, 455, 456
BOSE, Subhas Chandra, 155, 200, 357; release of, 34
BRAHMA, 322
Brahmacharya, 11, 152, 209, 288 to 290; and spinning-wheel, 141
BUDDHA, 62 to 64, 284
BUDDHISM, 64, 188; and Hinduism, 62, 63
BURFIWALA, Kanchanlal Motilal, 25

CAMPBELL, Fred E., 433
CARNEGIE, 413
CARR, Sir Hubert, 420
CHAITANYA, 274, 347
CHAKRAVARTI, Shyamsundar, 58, 216, 339, 356, 401
CHANDIWALA, Brijkrishna, 26, 77
CHARITRAVIJAY, 73
CHARKHA, *see* SPINNING-WHEEL
CHATTERJEE, B.C., 351
CHATURVEDI, Benarsidas, 429
CHAUDHARI, Rai Yatindra Nath, 58
CHINTAMANI, C.Y., 257, 283, 391
CHRIST, Jesus, 61, 62, 206, 350, 437, 439; teachings of, 204, 205
CHRISTIANITY, 12, 188, 435 to 438
CHRISTIANS, 16, 174, 204, 221, 244, 250, 272, 343, 353, 434, 435, 452
CHUNDER, Nirmal Chunder, 41, 194, 275
CHURCHILL, Winston, 265
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, 305, 352, 372; and khaddar, 89
CIVIL RESISTANCE, 391, 462, 463
COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA BILL, 464; Annie Besant's memorandum on, 447; essential provisions of, 373
CONGRESSMEN, 193, 198, 257, 373, 379 392, 406, 415, 424, 452, 458, 459; and village service, 159
COUNCIL(s), 5, 84, 87, 90, 101, 169, 183, 193, 251, 342, 358, 372, 376, 415; entry into, 2, 251, 264, 366, 403, 406, 415, —and national programme, 243; and Swarajists, 82, 83, 264
COW-PROTECTION, 18, 19, 46, 47, 139, 253, 413, 414
CRESSWELL, 186
CURZON, Lord, 239

DAMAYANTI, 99, 363
DAS, Basanti Devi, 41, 229, 245, 252, 264, 267, 297, 298, 300, 306 to 310, 318, 323, 339, 354, 355, 359, 360, 377, 387, 425
DAS, C.R., 2 to 5, 13, 28 to 32, 35 to 37, 40, 41, 55, 57, 80 to 84, 86, 90, 136, 169, 170, 178, 194, 195, 202, 203, 229, 246 to 253, 257, 263 to 270, 275, 276, 280 to 282, 293, 295, 297 to 300, 302 to 307, 311, 313 to 318, 323 to 325, 327, 336 to 338, 341, 342, 348, 349, 351,

352, 354, 355, 357 to 361, 370, 371, 375 to 383, 386 to 388, 391, 398 to 400, 405, 416, 419, 421, 422, 425 to 427, 440, 441, 447, 451, 458, 464; and hand-spinning, 452-3; last journey of, 336-7; tribute to memory of, 328
DAS GUPTA, Hirendra Nath, 194
DAS GUPTA, Satish Chandra, 54, 58, 78, 86, 92, 104, 119, 146, 147, 190, 229, 300, 355, 358, 359, 368, 369, 404
DAS, Mona, 245, 246
DAS, Satish Ranjan, 276, 279
DASHRATHA, 333
DESAI, Mahadev, 26, 72, 86, 108, 136, 180, 227, 339, 340, 359, 361, 385
DESAI, Pragji, 173
DESHBANDHU CHARKHA AND KHADDAR MEMORIAL, *see* ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND
DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL, *see* ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND
DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL SERVICE, *see* ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND
DESHMUKH, 258
DEVBHABHI, 203, 278
DHARMAPALA, Dr., 61, 63
DHIRA BHAGAT, 238
DRAUPADI, 99
DUTTA, Aswini Kumar, 238
DYER, 244

EAST INDIA COMPANY, 33, 221
(*The*) *Englishman*, 282
ENGLISHMEN, 2, 31, 33, 49, 69, 190, 244, 250, 264, 265, 287, 348, 357, 360, 372, 391, 433, 437, 444, 445, 448, 464

Forward, 155, 339, 356, 429

GANDHI, Devdas, 96, 119, 226, 311, 385, 399
GANDHI, Harilal, 73, 259 to 261
GANDHI, Jamnadas, 278
GANDHI, Kasturba, 73, 311
GANDHI, Khushalchand, 203, 278, 311
GANDHI, Lakshmidas, 180
GANDHI, Maganlal, 73, 180
GANDHI, Mohandas Karamchand; and spinning franchise, 75, 102, 387-8; (his) comments on complaint against Harilal Gandhi, 259-62; (his) name struck off from the rolls of the Society of Inner Temple, 2; (his) support to J. M. Sen Gupta for the Mayorship of Calcutta Corporation, 353-4, 419-21
GANDHI, Narandas, 174, 203, 278
GANDHI, Ota, 311
GAURAKSHA MANDAL, 170
Geeta Beej, 88
GHOSAL, Satya Mohan, 276
Ghosh, Miss, 92
GHOSH, Aurobindo, 304, 324
GHOSH, Kali Mohan, 71
GHOSH, Dr. Prafulla, 191
GIDWANI, A.T., 171
GIRDHARI, 171
GOD, 306, 336, 347, 436, 448
GOKHALE, Gopal Krishna, 37, 144, 170, 195
GOSWAMI, Tulsi Chandra, 275
GUHA, 107
GULNAR, 125, 216

HAKIM SAHIB, *see* KHAN, Hakim Ajmal
HANUMAN, 112
HARISHCHANDRA, 306
HEBER, Bishop, 436

HERTZOG, 186
Hindi Navajivan, 383
HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION, 3, 101, 294, 332, 357, 373, 390-1
HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY, 1, 2, 7, 10,11, 14, 32, 42, 67 to 69, 74 to 76, 97, 122, 126, 140, 143, 163, 187, 201, 212, 228, 257, 259, 265, 332, 343, 371, 395, 419, 463 to 465
HINDUISM, 7, 10, 12, 15 to 17, 29, 61, 67, 98, 103, 106, 188, 189, 206, 209, 228, 308, 309, 316, 319, 330, 343, 384, 412, 417, 435; and Buddhism, 62-3; truth essence of, 65
HINDUS, 1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 29, 61, 72, 103, 106, 137, 143, 170, 187 to 189, 198, 201, 202, 207, 221, 228, 244, 265, 272, 287, 298, 309, 319 to 321, 327, 330 to 332, 343, 375, 384, 412 to 414, 433, 452, 465; and Muslims, 41, 47, 68, 69, 77, 100, 102, 127, 145, 178, 181 to 183, 239, 250, 251, 270, 305, 348, 349, 352, 353, 374, 396, 445
HIRANYAKASHIPU, 333
History of Hindu Chemistry, 8
HURBAT SINGH, 70
HUSSAIN, Fazli, 389

INDEPENDENTS, 373
Indian Home Rule, 49, 164, 221
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, 1, 5, 8, 35, 64, 68 to 71, 75, 79, 82, 86, 99, 100, 102, 130, 156 to 158, 160 to 162, 164, 167, 183, 184, 192, 198, 228, 239, 242, 243, 250, 253, 254, 256 to 259, 261, 266, 268, 269, 283, 287, 288, 291, 292, 297, 298, 344, 347, 372 to 374, 377, 378, 380, 388, 392, 398, 403, 405 to 410, 415, 416, 421 to 424, 446, 447, 449, 450, 452, 455 to 457, 459, 463; aim of, 29; All-India Committee of, 156, 157, 161, 167, 253, 356, 358, 369, 387, 388, 398 to 400, 404, 406, 407, 422 to 424, 457
ISLAM, 12, 61, 188, 220, 343, 349, 352
IYER, V.V.S., 256

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM, 269
JANAKIBEHN, 224
JERAJANI, Vithaldas, 26
JEWS, 183, 184, 221, 244
JINNAH, Mahomed Ali, 202, 257, 283, 389
JIVANLAL, 19
JOGEN, 193
JOGENDRA SINGH, Sardar, 242-4
JOHN, St., 437
JUGALKISHORE, Acharya, 171
JYOTI PRASAD, 165

KAUJALJI, H. S., 93
KELAPPAN, 385
KELKAR, N.C., 88, 356
KETKAR, G.V., 88
KHADI (Khaddar), 1, 8, 11, 14, 15, 23, 25, 26, 34, 37, 40 to 42, 52, 53, 56, 58, 67 to 69, 74, 77, 78, 86, 88, 93, 102, 104, 105, 107, 115 to 118, 121, 126, 127, 129, 136, 140, 144, 146, 147, 150, 160, 164, 165, 169, 173, 176, 179, 181, 182, 189 to 191, 193, 196, 197, 209, 212, 215, 216, 219, 220, 225, 230, 235, 243, 253, 271, 272, 285, 287, 297, 337, 345, 369 to 372, 395, 397, 400, 404, 405 429, 439, 453, 454, 459, 465; and

agriculture, 460; and civil disobedience, 89; and spinning, 7, 9, 10, 283, 290, 325, 357, 388, 396, 400, 409, 423, 425, 426, 449, 450, 456, 457, 463, —in Bengal, 355; in Kathiawar, 213-4; in Sind and Coorg, 198; possibilities of, 57; principle of, 154; propaganda of, 254; use of, 2; work of, 203; wearing of, as a permanent part of the franchise, 405
— ASSOCIATION, 23
— MOVEMENT, 40, 81, 192
— PRATISHTHAN, 35, 127, 144, 146, 160, 190 to 192, 226, 286, 325, 340, 355, 368-9, 405; charkha of, 453
KHAN, Hakim Ajmal, 43, 162, 222, 240
Khilafat, 441
KHILAFAT PARTY, 161 to 163
KHWAJA, A.M., 240
KORAN, 436, 441
KOTHARI, Manilal, 19, 173
KRISHNA, Lord, 42, 50, 99, 134, 135, 237, 306, 317, 439
KRISHNADAS, 26, 119, 311, 404
KRISHNAIYA, 430
KRISTODAS, *see* KRISHNADAS
KUMBHAKARNA, 87
KUNDU, Nishithnath, 202, 405
KUSARY, Jitendranath, 186

LAD YUVAK MANDAL, 20
LAJPAT RAI, 257
LAW, C.C., 279
LAXMIBAI, *see* RANI OF JHANSI
LIBERALS, 352, 373
Light of Asia, 62
LLOYD, George, 142
LOKAMANYA, *see* TILAK, Bal Gangadhar
LYTTON, Lord, 31

MCMILLAN, 96
MACSWINEY, Terence, 49, 379
MADDOCK, Col., 43
Mahabharata, 99, 134, 135, 315, 316
MAHAVIRA, 62
MAHENDRA PRATAP, Raja, 239
(*The*) *Maharatta*, 257
MAITRA, Taraknath, 410
MALAN, 444
MALAVIYA, Madan Mohan, 59, 114, 202, 257, 268, 320 to 323
Manchester Guardian, 137
MANDALAY PRISON; discharge of the prisoners in, 6, 34
MANHAR, 224
MANU, 51; his prescription of four ways for the Kshatriya, 50
MARWARI AGRAWAL CONFERENCE, 411-4
MATHURADAS, 368
MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI, 125
MAZUMDAR, Ambika Charan, 120
MAZUMDAR, Basant Kumar, 193
MEHTA, Kalyanji, 145, 173, 174
MEHTA, Sir Pherozeshah Merwanji, 195, 380, 421
MIA, Badshah, 228
MILLER, Dr., 407
MIRABEHN, 414
MIRBEL, Antoinette, 241
MITTER, Satyendra, 97
MODI, Ramniklal, 73
MOOKHERJEE, Sir Rajendra, 276, 279
MORENO, Dr. H.W.B., 189, 190, 409, 446; interview to, 182-5
MORLEY, Lord, 444
MUDDIMAN COMMITTEE, 351; Minority report of, 389
MUKHERJEE, Satish Chandra, 37, 136
MURRAY, Rev. A., 204, 205, 434

MUSLIMS, 9, 10, 16, 29, 30, 46, 61, 63, 76, 106, 170, 197, 198, 201, 202, 221, 228, 240, 244, 265, 272, 287, 298, 320, 321, 330 to 332, 343, 352, 375, 446, 451, 452, 461, 465; and Hindus, 41, 47, 68, 69, 77, 100, 102, 103, 127, 145, 178, 181 to 183, 239, 250, 251, 270, 305, 348, 349, 352, 353, 374, 396, 445

NAG, Hardayal, 194, 195, 404; interview to, 80-8
NAIDU, Sarojini, 247, 257, 401
NAIDU, Dr. Varadarajulu, 168, 169, 172
NAIR, K. Kelappan, 262, 432
NANDA, 72
NANDINI, 212, 213
NAOROJI, Dadabhai, 123, 195, 342, 449
NATARAJAN, 61
NATIONAL EDUCATION, 397-8
NATIONAL PROGRAMME, 243
NATIONAL SCHOOLS, 129, 147, 397
NATIONAL SERVICE; the only dharma, 303; dharma of, 305
NATIONALISTS, 282
Navajivan, 18, 25, 73, 150, 203, 311, 333, 363 to 368, 411, 412, 427
NAYYAR, Pyarelal, 385
NEHRU, Jawaharlal, 172, 218, 240, 262, 401, 426
NEHRU, Motilal, 5, 80, 240, 262, 264, 269, 339, 357, 389 to 391, 398, 399, 401, 406, 422, 425, 455, 456
NEPAL, Babu, 124
NO-CHANGERS, 179, 243, 406, 423, 424
NON-CO-OPERATION, 2, 11, 81, 82, 85, 87, 194, 351, 389, 390, 457, 458, 462; and non-violence, 82, 243, 292
— MOVEMENT, 300, —in Bengal, 86
NON-CO-OPERATORS, 84, 85, 87. *See* also SATYAGRAHIS.
NON-SWARAJISTS, 455
NON-VIOLENCE, 30, 31, 42, 49, 50, 52, 68, 70, 81, 89 to 91, 131 to 133, 150, 195, 209, 230, 236, 239, 241, 244, 250, 264, 289 to 291, 299, 322, 375, 412, 417, 450, 462, 463; and swaraj, 358; and non-co-operation, 82; and spinning-wheel, 135, 143, 144

OSMAN, 294

PAL, Kristodas, 416, 417
PANDIT, Vasumati, 96, 224, 278, 371
PAREKH, Devchand, 179, 213, 277, 278
PARSIS, 16, 183, 184, 221, 244, 250, 272, 298, 413, 452
PARVATI, 145, 363
PATEL, Dahyabhai, 97, 180, 226, 227, 312, 386
PATEL, Manibehn, 97, 180, 226, 312, 386
PATEL, Vallabhbhai, 233, 247, 380, 401
PATEL, Yashoda, 180
PETIT, 429
PHOOKEN, 209, 355
PITT, W. H., 385, 431, 432
POPE, Dr., 436
PRABARTAK SANGH, 41, 191; ideal of, 42
PRAHLAD, 333, 335
PRATAP, 357, 358
Principles of Freedom, 49
PRITAM, 273
PRO-CHANGERS, 243, 406
PUNIYA, 73
PUNJAB CONGRESS INQUIRY COM-

MITTEE, 268
PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS, 170

QURESHI, Shuaib, 294, 403, 404

RAGHU, 110
RAGHUVIR NARAYANSINGH, 149, 165
RAI, Priya, 452; charkha of, 453
RAJAGOPALACHARI, C., 104, 283, 286, 384, 431, 432
RAJENDRA NATH, 328
RAJENDRA PRASAD, 339, 359, 399
RAMA, 21, 99, 107, 109 to 112, 126, 149, 306, 308, 317, 333, 335, 439
Ramarajya, 235
RAMDAS, 347
RAMJIBHAI, 179
RANADE, Mahadev Govind, 195
RANADE, Ramabai, 306
RANCHHODDAS, 198
RANI OF JHANSI, 220
RANIBALA, 216
RAO, D. Hanumant, 430
RASUL, Abdur, 465
RAY, Kirenshekhar, 194
RAY, Dr. P. C., 8, 13, 37, 56, 58, 65, 77, 84, 144 to 146, 190, 192, 199, 249, 251, 267, 368, 401
RAVANA, 112, 178
READING, Lord, 31, 281, 439; talks between Lord Birkenhead and, 373
REFORMS, 391
RELIGION, 47, 63, 74, 170, 188, 189, 204, 207, 208, 221, 232, 235, 315, 319; protection of, 209
REVISION SETTLEMENT, 22
ROMAIN ROLLAND, 322
ROWLATT ACT, 350
ROY, Bidhan Chandra, 275, 401
ROY, Kamini, 58
ROY, Satcouripati, 245, 327, 341, 354, 358
RUDRA, Sudhir, 313
RUDRA, Sushil Kumar, 282, 310, 350, 351
RUKHI, 73, 145

SADHURAM TULARAM, 383
SAHA, Gopimohan, 49
SALISBURY, Lord, 205, 438
SAPRU, Tej Bahadur, 257, 283, 389
SASMAL, B. N., 84
SASTRI, V. S. Srinivasa, 202, 257, 283, 389, 391
SATYAGRAHA, 188, 208, 209, 290, 291, 322, 333, 350, 363, 365, 366, 412; against abuses at Tarkeshwar temple, 293; and physical force, 51; resolution regarding, at Petlad, 22
SATYAGRAHIS, 189, 332, 333; duty of, 22-3, 293. *See* also NON-CO-OPERATORS.
SATYAVATI, 333
Saurashtra, 108
SAVITRI, 363
(*The*) *Searchlight*, 281
SEN GUPTA, Dr. Indra Narayan, 200
SEN GUPTA, J. M., 88, 282, 330, 331, 353, 354, 374, 378 to 380, 419 to 421, 461
SEN, N. C., 296
SEPOY REVOLT, 220
Servant, 216, 298
SHAFI, Sir Mohmad, 257
SHAKESPEARE, 317
SHARMA, 430
SHRAVANA KUMAR, 284
SIDGWICK, 445

SIKHS, 244, 452
SINHA, Lord, 276
SIRCAR, N. N., 279
SIRCAR, Nalini Ranjan, 194, 276, 401
SIRKAR, Nil Ratan, 276, 401
SITA, 35, 99, 107, 112, 126, 170, 308
SMUTS, 186
SORABJI, 455
SPINNING, 2, 7, 8, 9, 16, 23 to 25, 40, 58, 66, 67, 77 to 79, 81, 87, 92, 94, 95, 102, 115, 117, 121 to 123, 126 to 128, 147, 150, 159, 160, 165, 166, 173, 176, 178, 179, 182, 190, 193, 196 to 198, 200, 201, 210, 213, 215, 217, 219 to 221, 225, 226, 235, 236, 239, 251, 252, 271, 272, 285, 291, 300, 337, 345, 346, 355, 388, 397, 400, 404, 405, 410, 411, 422, 429, 449, 450, 452, 453, 457, 460; and khadi, 290, 325, 409, 423; and swaraj, 69, 70, 229; and Swarajists, 40, 86; as qualification for the franchise, 118; in schools, 218, 285
—FRANCHISE, 75, 102, 163, 166, 167, 175, 176, 184, 256 to 259, 345, 356, 387, 388, 405 to 407, 409, 446, 450, 457, —clause, 421 to 423, —resolution, 130; qualification of, 271, 372; retention of, 34
SPINNING-WHEEL, 1, 8, 11, 15, 16, 23, 27, 32 to 34, 39, 42, 53, 65 to 68, 70, 71, 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 85 to 87, 89, 91, 92, 98, 101, 102, 104, 105, 107, 110, 115, 126, 127, 129 to 131, 134, 135, 142, 144, 146, 150, 155, 159, 160, 163 to 165, 168, 169, 173, 176, 179, 181, 187, 190, 193, 198, 199, 201, 211 to 213, 216, 217, 220, 226, 228, 229, 235, 239, 244, 252, 253, 255, 259, 272, 278, 283, 287, 298, 299, 305, 320, 325, 326, 342, 352, 356, 358, 359, 364 to 366, 371, 395, 398, 399, 401, 410, 411, 423, 429, 439, 451 to 455, 460, 462, 465; and *brahmacharya*, 141; and khaddar, 7, 9, 10, 357, 388, 396, 400, 425, 426, 449, 456, 457, 463; and non-violence, 135, 143-4; and swaraj, 32; and Swarajists, 81, 305; as franchise for the Indian National Congress, 99; in schools, 187, 219; of Khadi Pratishthan, 191
(*The*) *Statesman*, 280; interview to, 1-3; letter to, 462-4
STEPHEN, Justice, 46
STRONG, 239
SUBBA RAO, G. V., 53
SUDHANVA, 309
SUHRAWARDY, 357, 461
SUJATA, 246, 307
SUNEETI DEVI, 60
SUPRAVA DEVI, 279
SURDAS, 112
SURESH, Dr., 103, 104
SWADESHI, 197, 464, 465
— MOVEMENT, 372
SWARAJ, 7, 13, 14, 16, 31, 42, 53, 64, 65, 68, 71, 74, 76, 80, 81, 83, 91, 94, 100, 101, 103, 125, 127, 130, 134, 135, 139, 142, 167, 169, 170, 178, 182, 189, 193, 210, 212, 228, 235, 244, 249, 250, 254, 257, 261, 265, 287, 297, 300, 305, 314, 342, 359, 365, 366, 371, 382, 390, 391, 394 to 396, 426, 429,

440, 449; and non-violence, 299, 358, 400; and soldiers, 50, 51; and spinning, 32, 69, 70, 229; definition of, 138, 280-1

SWARAJISTS, 1, 3, 5, 6, 58, 70, 80, 82 to 84, 102, 155, 169, 179, 193, 194, 196, 243, 257, 258, 264, 265, 281, 282, 299, 342, 352, 354 to 356, 372, 373, 378, 386 to 388, 390, 391, 398, 403, 405 to 407, 415, 416, 419, 421 to 424, 446, 455, 457, 461, 464; agreement with, 242; and spinning, 40, 86; and spinning-wheel, 81, 305; methods of, 85

TAGORE, Dwijendra Nath, 212

TAGORE, Rabindranath, 60, 124, 212, 401; Gandhiji's interview with, 172-3

TEGART, 331

TILAK, Bal Gangadhar, 138, 269, 270, 284, 302 to 305, 390, 425, 429, 449

TILAK SWARAJ FUND, 253, 295, 440

TULSIDAS, 21, 112, 347

UNTOUCHABILITY, 3, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 69, 74, 75, 77, 91, 98, 100, 103, 106, 107, 110, 137, 138, 143, 148, 163, 170, 181, 187, 228, 239, 273, 274, 287, 319, 334, 343, 371, 396, 463; removal of, 1, 2, 11, 14, 32, 42, 65, 66, 140, 259, 384, 395

UNTOUCHABLES, 7, 10, 16, 53, 69, 98, 121, 137, 143, 169, 170, 184, 274, 275, 318, 319, 384, 385

UPANISHADS, 212, 336, 435

URMILA DEVI, 246, 252

UTTAMCHAND BAPA, 311

Vaishnavas, 13, 231, 274

VALLABHACHARYA, 274

Varnashrama, 10, 260, 412; not to be destroyed, 17

VASISHTHA, 327

Vasumate, 298

VAZE, S. A., 186

VEDAS, 21, 212, 223

VEMANA, 326, 327

VENKATAPPAYYA, Konda, 415

VIVEKANAND, 50, 51

WALLACE, Dr. J. R., 183

WATTON, Spencer, 434

WILLINGDON, Lord, 439

WORDSWORTH, 417

(*The*) *World*, 214

Young India, 38, 71, 73, 105, 161, 191, 218, 249, 256, 259, 283, 311, 318, 321, 322, 339, 343, 346, 352, 353, 356, 361, 367, 373, 400, 404, 411, 412, 416, 450, 451, 462

ZAVERBHAI, 23

ZOROASTRIANISM, 436

ERRATA

PAGE		FOR	READ
138	Paragraph 2, line 6	property of privilege or sanyasin.	*property or privilege of sannyasins.*
203	Item 114, date line	[*June 6, 1925*]	June 1, 1925 The item should be read after item 106.
225	Item 129	Date line	June 12, 1925
371	Item 232, date line	[*July 13, 1925*]	July 9, 1925 The item should be read after item 221.
462	Item 284, line .10	idea or preparation	*idea of preparation*